<u>ORISSA *in the* CROSSFIRE</u>

Kandhamal Burning

PREFACE

I arrived in India in early September 2008. It had been over four years since my last visit. During my previous trips to India, I had travelled throughout the Northeast part of the country. In Arunchal Pradesh, Assam and Nagaland I had met with many tribal people and was fortunate to gain first hand experience of the culture and conditions prevalent in that part of the country. Northeast India is abundant and verdant. Its people represent an amazing diversity of languages, traditons and lifestyles. Unfortunately, despite the beauty and innocence of the region it is plagued by political violence and economic disparity.

In early September 2008 I found myself in Northeast India. This time I was in Hojai, Assam. Located near the Bangladeshi border it is an area of some tension and like many towns of NE India, it is a frequent target for bomb blasts and machine gun killings. I had been invited by the tribal organization VKA (Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram) to participate in their Tribal Leadership Conference. During this meeting I met with thousands of Indian people and with the representatives of nearly every tribe of the Northeast including delegates from Sikkhim. The diversity expressed by these various people emphasized the ideal of *'Unity in Diversity.'* Here I met with the Buddhists of Tawang and Sikkhim, the Hindu Tribals of Tripura and Manipura and the tribal followers of Danyi Polo. I also met with various other representatives of the diverse tribal faiths of NE India as well. Though Northeast India is home to many Indian tribes it is actually a State to the south of India that is home to a majority of India's tribespeople. This state is called Orissa or Odisha.

Coincidently, a mere two weeks before my arrival in India the tribes of Orissa had gone on the warpath. According to media reports, countless Christian churches were being burnt and worst of all Christians were allegedly being hunted down and killed. The violence had erupted after an 82 year old Hindu Monk dedicated to the upliftment of Orissa's tribespeople had been assassinated in a most brutal manner. The day chosen for his assassination was also seen as an intentional provocation. The day was Janmashtami, the birthday of Lord Krishna; a holiday celebtrated across India. The location of the assassination also caused great anguish to the tribespeople. A group of somewhere between 18 to 36 armed men had descended upon a local girls school,

lobbing grenades and firing machine guns into the air. The headmistress of the school was gunned down as she attempted to shield the life of her mentor, the 82 year old monk and founder of the school, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. A visiting parent along with two junior monks were also viciously slaughtered as the young students fled for their lives.

Orissa was stunned by the violence and the entire State went into mourning. Hindus throughout the world were outraged. Yet worst was to come. As a stunned people began to confront the fact that the authorities had failed to protect its citizens, the media began a campaign of calumny. Ignoring the brutal assassination of a beloved spiritual leader as the root of the crisis the media began to depict the response to the massacre as the story. Report after report flooded the world media depicting the outraged tribal response as the actions of blood-thirsty criminals and marketers of hate. Ignoring the hundreds of years of anguish and the long simmering disputes between the local Kandha tribespeople and the Christian converted Pana, the media and political left created an artificial template lambasting the Hindus as the sole perpetrators of the violence.

It was in the midst of this crisis that I arrived in Orissa to investigate the circumstances surrounding the violence. I arrived in Bhuvaneshwar, the capital of Orissa, on September 15, 2008. The monsoon season was in full swing. The worst floods in nearly 70 years washed over the land. The state highway was washed out several times and thousands of people were left homeless. Amazingly life went on as usual with very little interruption. I had a couple miraculous escapes as we drove around Orissa crossing bridges only hours before they were swamped by the swollen rivers of the region.

During my 5 weeks in Orissa I met with many people on all sides of the issue. Most people were forthright and clear about the issues plaguing the people. Many of the people, in fact, most of the people I met with had excellent solutions to the problems at hand. However the violence and disparity experienced by the people of Orissa and India at large has created a kind of chaos and instability. Thus India moves from one crisis to the other. The greatest obstacle in the way of India's progress is the state of denial that is endemic to country. Without understanding the true foundation of the problem it is almost impossible to provide any solution. The truth is most often buried and manipulated by vested interests. Any effort to reveal the truth is highlighted as a *'communal'* or *'prejudiced'* effort. Victims are ignored and culprits are emboldened as the various political players entrench themselves in the suffering of the people. India's people are categorized and cataloged and thus divided againt themselves by language, religion, ethnicity, caste and clan. Government benefits are given out and fought over.

Many take advantage of government largesse based upon their greed as the truly needy are left on the way side. India's tribal people have been left far behind as some of India's non-tribal citizens expertly and criminally manipulate the system. In this way tribal lands and rights are being accessed by non-tribals to the disadvantage of the tribals. Long embittered, India's tribes are only now attempting to regain lost ground. Their struggle has been a long one and is ongoing.

In this report I have attempted to present the facts as they happened. I have referenced many experts in both the history of the region and personally interviewed the leading investigating journalists and other informed parties in regard to Orissa's tribal crisis. I was also quite fortunate to have met with and interviewed the world's leading experts on India's tribal condition. I am grateful to the faculty, staff and students of North Orissa University's Tribal studies program. It is the only one of its kind in the world and is located in the heart of Orissa's tribal country. In particular Professor Laxman Sahu of NOU's Tribal studies program and his students were very enlightening. I also gathered much information from Orissa's Tribal Museum experts and was delighted to see the many artifacts from Orissa's living cultures. The experts from the Governments Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes (ST-SC) Dept were also generous with their time and I am grateful to them for their help. These many expert views on Orissa's tribal condition are irreplaceable and crucial towards gaining an accurate understanding of Orissa's socio-political conditions. I am also grateful to Janmejay Sahu and Sanjay Jena for their hospitality, assistance and guidance during my stay in Orissa.

The information in this report is primarily based upon the testimony of the leading academics of Orissa, authoritative and verifiable news reports and my personal observations obtained during interviews and during my interactive visits to various locations during my fact-finding mission to the region.

"Orissa in the Crossfire' not only provides many of the vital missing details related to the Hindu-Christian violence that swept the Kandhamal district of Orissa in 2008, it highlights the history of Orissa and its tribes. Forgotten by most is the fact that Orissa was once a great naval power. Its ships plied the ancient seas from Japan to Rome. However today, Orissa is one of India's poorest regions. Ironically it was once one of the wealthiest kingdoms of the ancient world. Its city of Puri has long been a place of great significance and it remains as an epicenter of devotion and faith for countless millions.

In August 2009, this report was presented to the US State Department by Ram Madhav, a National Executive of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha. It is now

available to the public at large. While many have familiarized themselves with the propaganda that has fictionalized the events surrounding the Kandhamal crisis few have had access to the facts as they are. It is my hope that the these truths and facts can now be accessed. The true history of Kandhamal and the struggles of its people deserve a fair hearing in the court of public opinion. Let us not add to their anguish by ignoring, negating and vilifying their cause and their cries for justice. Let the tribes people of Kandhamal rise up out of their undeserved shame. Long labeled as *'a cruel human sacrificing tribe of ruthless savages'* it is time the truth be revealed. It is time for the world to learn about the Kandha *'God of Light'* and their Culture of Life.
Brannon Parker
November 7, 2009

FOREWORD

Throughout history native people have been at the forefront of the struggle over land, tradition and individual freedom. Generally native people are uncomplicated. They do not busy themselves with the intricacies of the law or the tumult of politics. In their subconscious view they feel that their traditions and ways have served them well over the generations. They therefore are not in a hurry to develop mechanisms for change and growth. However this is a double edged sword. It leaves them vulnerable and does not allow for the social fluidity required in a rapidly changing and globalized society.

Outside forces have often taken advantage of this phenomenon. Many times these forces come with positive intentions to help the underprivileged. However for them the fundamentals of native society are flawed and thus the entire effort becomes disruptive. Ironically when native groups attempt to organize themselves they are wrongly portrayed by the very forces that are committed to changing them. It is similar to a doctor that resents a patient's success in healing himself. If a physician truly hoped for the well being of a patient he would rejoice at a patient's self reliance. However if the doctor were merely focused on the income provided by an unhealthy client he would see the patient's well being as a negative. This is the case with the many foreign based organizations and foreign influenced native ideologues active within India.

India self reliant is an India that is successful. The crutches are no longer required yet there are many that demand that India remain crippled as a society. They see the native Hindu as an example of what is wrong with India. Thus when the Hindu resolves injustice and inequality within the framework of Hinduism it is considered as

'*communal.*' The Indian native is thus denied access to his or her own tradition. Hindu ways are not considered as a viable alternative towards solving the problems confronted by the nation as a whole. Even worse the political climate is such that it is considered reasonable to hate and defame anyone identified as '*Hindutwa*.' In the name of secularism and minority rights a campaign of hatred has been generated. The very word Hindu has artificially been construed as a form of religious exclusivism. They will say that Islam and Christianity are just as much Indian as Hinduism yet ignore the tenets of both Islam and Christianity that reject the authenticity of Hinduism. Hinduism has been lumped into the category of being yet another exclusive form of religion. Meanwhile Hinduism recognizes all other spiritual paths as legitimate. Despite this fact an emphasis on Hinduism is considered as a dismissal of any other Indian identity. Islam has over 70 different branches yet no Muslim nation can claim to host them all. It is India, the only country in the world that is home to every branch of Islam. India's Hindu-based tradition of religious tolerance and freedom of conscience allows for this.

Certainly one can be an Indian without being a follower of the Hindu religion. However since a majority of Indians do practice the Hindu religion the intentional effort to divorce Hinduism and the Hindu outlook from the halls of governance, politics, academia and entertainment is an assault upon human liberty. There are various outlooks on life and upon the functioning of society. India's Hindu civilization has a long track record. It has long been confronted with and dealt with the very same problems that have plagued humanity at large. Thus in Hinduism we find many solutions towards our modern crisis.

The word Dharma itself reflects this. The literal meaning of the Sanskrit word Dharma means *'that which sustains.'* Here the word Dharma describes the true role of Hinduism. In fact the word Dharma expresses the function of anything that is sustainable. By denuding India's ancient Hindu traditions and labeling them as just another religion or emotional belief system the entire world loses a valuable legacy.

The Communists, the Christians, the Muslims, the Industrialists and Capitalists all claim to have answers as well. India has been and is a battlefield between these competing forces. However many Hindus believe that they have an alternate solution to the many problems facing India. This '*Hindu Way*' is based upon a uniquely Indian ethos and outlook. While people throughout the world are encouraged in their natural commitment to the ways of their ancestors, the Indian Hindu is frequently portrayed as a retrograde bigot for attempting to harness Hinduism for the good of the people.

In reality if India's indigenous Hindu traditions were applied towards resolving India's problems the many non-Indic political institutions would become redundant.

Non-Hindu religions would however not be threatened but would become naturally amalgamated within Hindu society. The reverse however is not the case as seen in the example of Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia or within Communist societies. India itself under the Congress Party rule has a terrible record. It denigrates Hindu based social and political efforts as a form of fascism and communal hate. It, along with many Indian leftists and media outlets, savages any activism that is based upon the Hindu outlook or even upon a sense of Indian Nationalism.

There are currently thousands of Indian Hindus that have dedicated their lives to the service of the Indian people. Unlike other activists they reinforce the indigenous spiritual heritage and thus the traditional Indian identity of the people. In the 1950s, India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru bemoaned the lack of Indian people dedicated towards the betterment of the less fortunate.

"In the tribal areas many Christian missionaries have devoted their lives to the tribes there. I wish that there were Indians who were willing to serve the tribal folk in this way. I know that there are some Indians now who are doing this, but I would like more of them to do so.

This report highlights the efforts of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, an Indian who truly answered this call by Pandit Nehru. Not only did he dedicate his life to this cause but he lost his life in service to the tribal people of India. Singlehandedly he had developed an all around formula for the betterment of the tribal people. Not only did he feed and clothe them, he taught them how to farm, market their produce and provided educational facilities and hospitals as well. He did more than just provide for their basic needs, he also enhanced their rich spiritual traditions. In this way he gave the people a sense of self-worth and appreciation for their native ancestral ways. This combined with modern education and medical facilities, gave the people the necessary confidence to better their own lives and communities.

Unfortunately this was a threat to those forces committed to changing the tribal communities into a people disenchanted with their very own cultures and rich traditions. Throughout history violence has often been the response. We see that in American history any act that restored or inspired a sense of self-worth and a commitment to the native ways was squashed with violence. The words of the American Indian leaders which spoke of the native faith and self reliance were misconstrued by a hostile media. They became fodder for the rationalization for ethnic cleansing and genocide. Be it the '*Ghost Dance*' of Wovoka or the Pan-Indian movements of Chief Pontiac, the Prophet Tecumseh or Crazy Horse, they were crushed with cunning and brutal force. These American Indian prophets and leaders held that '*There may be other ways but the Indian ways are good and had served us well for generations. Let us*

therefore preserve them.' This alone was enough to brand them as '*enemies of progress'* and worthy of imprisonment, death and eventually destruction. In India this alone is enough to have one labeled a fascist and worthy of death at the hands of terrorists. As in the cases highlighted in this report, the murders of such people are now considered by many allegedly fair-minded people as tolerable and even deserved.

It is an irony of history that US President Lincoln who did so much to end the brutality of slavery also oversaw the largest mass execution in US history. On a winter's day in 1864 nearly 40 American Indians were hung to death for daring to stand up for themselves and for their people and their land. They, along with a majority of America's native people, were decimated for wanting to be who they were.

'*Orissa in the Crossfire'* reveals that this same war against the native people and ancient traditions never ended. India is currently the prime battle ground in this struggle. The good people of the world, who are troubled by the genocidal legacy of the past, need to recognize that this brutality continues to this very day in India. From his place of sanctuary in Dharmshala, India the Dalai Lama recently spoke of the *'Cultural Genocide'* of the Tibetan people and way of life. While it has long been fashionable to demand the *'Freedom of Tibet',* the world has virtually ignored the plight of the indigenous people and cultures of India. It is hoped that this report will generate awareness amongst the people of conscience throughout the world. Let the people of the world recognize the truth and demand an end to the ongoing '*Cultural Genocide'* of India's native cultures.

Today as the world is overwhelmed by constant crisis many are recognizing the inherent wisdom of the ancient indigenous cultures. Hinduism, as a religion that was practiced before the age of Pyramids or the construction of Stonehenge, is an authentically indigenous tradition. It is one of the few remaining root cultures in the world. These root cultures represent an ethos that does not put a price tag on anything and everything. They carry a vision that reminds us that the greatest thing of all is that which lives inside each of us. Most importantly it carries within it the recognition that we are truly one family. We are all connected and this entire creation is a sacred gift. It is our collective duty to preserve, protect and enhance this gift for not only the present but for the future generations as well.
Brannon Parker
July 6, 2009

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
I would like to thank my wife and kids for their patience and understanding during my 3 month long absence in the field researching the subject matter of this report. The following people also

contributed greatly towards the effort. This report could never have been produced without their help.

Sanjaya Jena
Janmejaya Sahu
Ram Madhav
Vijai Ganapa
Kiran
Seemanchal
Fred Tangalin
Rachel Mizuta
Avani Lange
Barbara Klausman
Nipuna Dasi
Anand Das
Bhima Guru Prasad Das
T. C. Peacock
Kana Nagabhushan
Dr Umesh Patri
Sameer Mohanty
Rami Desai
Rajaram Sathapathy of Times of India
Prof Sahu of the SC and ST Dept
Prof Sahu of North Orissa University Tribal Studies
The Faculty, Staff of NOU North Orissa University
The Students of the North Orissa University Tribal Studies
The Bhuvaneshwar Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math

ORISSA *in the CROSSFIRE*

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Introduction

Orissa, officially called Odisha, is a land of ancient cultures and traditions. In ancient times, it was known as Kalinga and it has always played an important role in the history of India. Today its people speak a variety of languages but its official language is Oriya or Odiya. History reveals that Orissa always held a prominent place in the hearts and minds of the Indian people. For many millennia Orissa has been a place of deep significance to the Hindu, Jain and Buddhist civilizations. Its city of Puri has justifiably been labeled as the Mecca of Hinduism. The many Saints, Acharyas, Gurus, Emperors, Kings and other luminaries of India, be they Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh or Muslim have made their way to Orissa in recognition of its immense importance as a sacred land. According to scholars, the primary culture of Orissa is that which has been identified as 'The Jagannath Culture'. Research shows that this Jagannath culture goes back beyond the era of pre-recorded history. The popularity of the Jagannnath culture crossed all social and cultural boundaries. Thus we see that at one time or another Orissa's Tribals, Jains, Hindus and others have all claimed Jagannath as their own.

Muslims also identified with this culture as evidenced by the tomb of Salabeg. Born in the 17th century, Salabeg became a popular Oriya poet singing devotional songs to Lord Jagannath. To this day Jagannath's Rathayatra cart makes a reverential customary halt before the tomb of this Muslim saint. Moreover, there is a memorial to the Moghul emperor Shah Jahan marking the spot from which he observed the Rathayatra festival. During the time of the British Raj, the fascination with the immensity of the annual Jagannath Rathayatra or chariot festival led to the coining of the English word 'Juggernaut'; a word that clearly reveals the impression the Jagannath culture had made upon the minds of the British.

A voluminous amount of scholarly research and investigation has gone into the history of Orissa's Jagannnath Culture. Some of this research suggests that its antiquity may in fact equal the antiquity of humanity's earliest known epochs of history. The work of the scholars R. Balakrishnan and A.P. Patnaik found startling similarities between the ancient legends of Sumeria and Egypt and the legends related to the Jagannath temple of Puri, Orissa. In fact it has been revealed by these scholars that the Jagannath temple is the only place of worship in the entire world that continues to follow the same elements of sacred ritual as those practiced in the Sumerian era. [I] Orissa's prominent place in the ancient history of the world is revealed by Dr. Benudhar Patra, a lecturer in the Department of History, Government College, Chandigarh, U.T. India. "*The discovery of a Babylonian ivory seal from the precincts of Barunighat temple at* Baripada (reported in the English daily Hindustan Standard dated 13th October, 1953, Calcutta with caption, "Babylonian seal unearthed") *"…assumes there was trade and commercial link between Baripada area (Mayurbhanj) and Babylonia.*[II] *In the early centuries of the Christian era Orissa had active trade contact with the western world, especially with the Roman Empire. The western trade flourished because of the demand for luxury articles of Kalinga in the Roman Empire. The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (1st century AD) of an unknown author besides mentioning the Kalingan port of Dosarene, has referred to the trade relation between Kalinga and the Roman world. He mentions Dosareneas producing the best type of ivory known as Dosarenic. Ptolemy, the Greek geographer during the second century A.D. has referred to another famous port of Kalinga named Palur from where ships disembarked directly across the Bay of Bengal to the South-East Asian countries. The discovery of rouletted ware from Sisupalgarh near Bhubaneswar and Tamluk in the Midnapore district of modern West Bengal is very significant in this regard. The rouletted ware was first identified and dated by Wheeler at Arikamedu. These were probably brought into Orissa by the Roman merchants. It may be mentioned that Roman bullas have been discovered at Sisupalgarh and Roman coins at Biratgarh and Bamanghati in the Mayurbhanj district, which also suggest trade link of Kalinga with the Roman Empire. Besides, a gold coin bearing Greco-Roman motif together with pottery fragments and terracotta figures of the Roman origin have been also discovered from Tamluk (the site of ancient Orissan Tamralipti port). A terracotta Greek tablet containing the thanks-giving of an unknown Greek sailor to the East wind has been discovered at Tilda, situated between Tamluk and Bamanghati. The poet Dandi in his Dasakumara Charita has referred to the coming of the Greeks to the port of Tamralipti. Apart from this, the recent archaeological excavations at Manikpatna, in the northern tip of the Chilka lake, has brought to light the Roman rouletted pottery and fragments of an amphora substantiate the clue of Orissa's contact with the far off Roman Empire. …Kalinga also had overseas trade links with Africa. The*

[I] **Heritage Tourism (Places of Tourist Interest in the District of Puri)** Sunil Kumar Patnaik Orissa Review * September - 2004 http://orissagov.nic.in/e-magazine/Orissareview/Sept2004/englishPdf/heritagetourism.pdf.

[II] **Orissa's contact with first civilization of the world** J.P.Singh Deo, A.N. Tiwari etal,(ed.) Reference Orissa, (2nd ed.), Bhubaneswar, 2000, pp. 673-674.

representation of a giraffe, purely an African animal, not seen anywhere else, in the sculpture of Konark only proves that Kalinga had commercial relations with Africa. The depiction of a giraffe in the Konark temple suggests that in ancient days either some people of Kalinga might have gone to Africa and seen the giraffe or one live giraffe must have been brought to Orissa by some merchants enabling many to see it. However, the sculpture of giraffe on the wall of the Sun temple is so accurate that the sculptor must have actually seen a live giraffe. It is hardly likely that the sculptor would have traveled to Africa. So a giraffe was actually brought alive by sea from East Africa to Orissa." [III]

In the ancient past, Orissa was an important center for international trade and a major maritime power. Brave and adventurous Ancient Sadhabas (Oriya mariners) of Kalinga, made daring voyages to different far-off lands of the world and had maritime contacts with Roman Empire, Africa, Persian coast, Arabian countries in the West and China, Japan, Siam, Champa, Burma, Ceylon etc in the East. Besides, the countries with which the people of Kalinga maintained enduring commercial and cultural relationship were the islands of Java, Sumatra, Bali and Borneo collectively known as Suvarnadvipa or modern Indonesia. Orissa's glorious maritime past has been proven by the excavated materials like Roman coins, Kushan coins, Chinese ceramic shards found from different parts of Orissa in the recent past. Some socio-religious festivals prevalent in coastal Orissa also provide vital information about Kalinga's glorious maritime heritage. Orisssa's Baliyatra festival literally means a 'Voyage to Bali'. It is also celebrated in far off Bali as 'Masakapan Ke Tukad' and in Thailand as 'Loy Brah Pradip'. [IV] In Japan a similar festival is celebrated known as Obon. Obon itself is a shortened form of the Japanese word Urabonne, Urabanna or Urabon'e which comes from the Sanskrit word Ullambana.

Naturally this same Orissa is extremely important to millions of Hindus throughout the world. In particular the followers of the ancient Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition have several significant connections to the state and specifically the city of Puri. It is the site of the Gambhira or 24 year residence of the founder of the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition, Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1534 AD) He spent the last 24 years of his life in Puri, Orissa. The Hindu King of Orissa of that time, Gajapati Maharaja Prataparudra Dev, regarded him as Krishna (God) incarnate. He was an enthusiastic patron and devotee of Chaitanya. It was during these years that Chaitanya is believed by his followers to have experienced deep revelatory trances through which he conveyed the essence of the Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy. Puri, Orissa is also the birthplace of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur (February 6, 1874 – January 1, 1937).

[III] **Maritime Contact of Ancient Orissa with the Western World** Dr. Benudhar Patra Orissa Review January 2005 http://orissagov.nic.in/e-magazine/Orissareview/jan2005/englishPdf/Maritime_Contact.pdf

[IV] **Baliyatra : Reminiscence of Orissa's Maritime Glory** Prabhukalyan Mohapatra Orissa Review * November – 2007 http://orissagov.nic.in/e-magazine/Orissareview/nov-2007/engpdf/Pages20-22.pdf.

Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati adjusted the traditions of Gaudiya Vaishnavism to conform to the technological and the social conditions of the twentieth century. He was the first Hindu preacher to frequently make use of the motor car and other modern inventions in his preaching mission. For him the printing press was the most effective means of spreading the teachings of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. He sent his followers to England and Germany during the 1930s and shunned unnecessary elements of Hindu orthodoxy as an obstacle to service. He was the author of many important Vedic translations, commentaries, and philosophical essays and laid the foundation for the spread of Vaishnavism throughout the world. As a direct result of these two Oriya Natives, Sri Krishna Chaitanya and Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, Orissa has now become a vital religious center for thousands of people beyond the boundaries of India.

For the Native people of Orissa, it is more than just a place of pilgrimage. Orissa's people are intensely aware of their ancient, unique and crucial place in the history of Hindu civilization and overall Indian society. Their very sense of identity is intensely fixed to their ancient heritage, history and traditions. Their songs, dances, languages, expressions, place names, festivals, life and death rituals et al represent who they are. They reflect their ancient roots for their very mode of life is intimately entwined with their religious traditions. In other words Orissa's Jagannnath culture is who they are. It is at the very core of their identity.

These facts are vital towards gaining an accurate understanding of the authentic cultural fabric of Orissa. It is imperative that in any attempt at deciphering Orissa we take into account the entire spectrum of its unique history and identity. The significance of Orissa is much more than an Indo-centric reality. It represents a vital and crucial link to our common human heritage. In recent times Orissa's Jagannath Culture has become a global phenomenon primarily due to the efforts of one of the 20th century's leading International exponents of Indian culture, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. A direct disciple of Orissa native Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada he broadcast the Jagannath Culture of Orissa throughout the world. Thus today the Rathayatra Festival is celebrated in major cities across the globe.

The vibrant Oriya culture is a living example of our collective ancient heritage. It undeniably holds great significance in the psychological and spiritual parameters of nearly a billion people spanning the entire globe. To ignore this or to minimize this reality will not only be unhelpful but it detriments our ability in gaining an accurate perspective and understanding of modern day Orissa and its people.

Kandhamal

"The development indices for Kandhamal are abysmal. Orissa has 30 districts. The Human Development Index for Orissa shows Kandhamal in the 29th place for gender development and it

is in the 30th place for reproductive health and 23rd in education. Per capita income for the district is Rs 4,743 a year, doctor availability is 23 and the number of hospital beds, 63 for a population of one lakh. While the Kandha tribal literacy rate is 27 per cent, the Panas enjoy a higher status at 34.5 per cent. Of Kandhamal district's population of 648,201, the Scheduled Tribe (Kandha) number stands at 336,809 (52 per cent). The Scheduled Caste population is 109,506 (17 per cent). There are about 1.18 lakh Christians (18 per cent of the district's total and 13 per cent of the Christian population of Orissa). Most importantly, 70 per cent or more of the Pana community are Christian converts."

The modern Indian State of Orissa (Odisha) is made up of 30 districts. Kandhamal previously known as Phulbani is one of them. Centrally located, it is a land of immense forests and rough terrain. It is has a rich history which includes an extremely ancient Shiva-Buddhist Temple and 2000 years ago it was a center for contemporaneous Hindu and Buddhist cultures. It was the hideout of the Bhaja Kings of the Ghumsar Kingdom. The people of Kandhamal have an ancient warrior tradition and fought against the Khemundi invasion. Furthermore Kandhamal was the epicenter of many tribal uprisings against the British. Due to their resistance the British were not able to add the region to their empire until the 1880s. Kandhamal native Bhangu Mallick was hung by the British for his active resistance.

Like the rest of ancient Orissa, Kandhmal had a flourishing economy and contributed to the overall prosperity of the region. Records show that from the pre-Christian era till the 16th century the entire region of modern Orissa had a flourishing trade with South East Asia. However, after the Afghan and Moghul conquests of Orissa, economic progress slowed. During the final phase of the Moghul period and during the Hindu Maratha rule as well, corruption and oppression by the local administrators forced many farmers to flee the State. The British rule from 1803 did not bring any relief. The British rule only furthered their misery and the Zamindar settlement system caused great harm to Orissa's agricultural production.[V] The tribal cultures suffered greatly as the British deprived them of their lands and rights to the forests in the name of development and forest preservation. Throughout the 1800s the tribes revolted against the repeated encroachments on their lands, traditional rights and against the assaults on their way of life, religion and culture. The region of Kandhamal and its Kandha tribals along with the Santal tribes were at the forefront of these indigenous struggles for survival. The Kandha, the largest population group in Kandhamal, are also referred to as the Kondh and the district of Kandhamal is named after them.

[V] **Orissa Human Development Report (OHDR)**
http://orissagov.nic.in/p&c/humandevelopment/summary/chap01.pdf.

Beginning in 1862, the British Administration began building roads into the tribal areas of Orissa. Unfortunately rather than progress, this development led to destruction of the native infrastructure, ecosystems and social systems. In an almost exact replication of the American Indian experience, the tribes of Orissa suddenly became targets and fugitives in their own lands. Along these roads came an influx of people from the plains of Orissa. These included traders, liquor salesmen, moneylenders, land speculators and Christian missionaries. The impact of these newcomers was traumatic. A social chaos, similar to that experienced by the American tribes threatened the cultural stability of the entire region. The destructive impact of these conflicting cultures and attitudes upon the tribes continues to this very day. An honest assessment of the current turmoil in Kandhamal requires taking these facts into account. The violent upheavals of today have a direct link to this foundation. They are rooted in the history of the region. Rather than a new phenomenon they represent a new phase in an ancient and ongoing struggle.

Christianity

In the early 1800s, there lived a social and spiritual leader of Cuttack, Orissa named Sadhu Sundar Das. He published and produced the Kujivara Patra, Orissa's first known newspaper. His ashram was at Kujivara near Cuttack. He propagated monotheism and opposed image worship. He published his newspaper by gathering the news of the day and his team of scribes produced the copy by handwriting the reports upon palm leaves. These were then taken to the main markets and read aloud by 'town criers.' This innovative effort combined with his social welfare efforts and spiritual insights highlighted Sadhu Sundar Das's role as a community leader. Notwithstanding claims crediting Christian missionaries as the publishers of Orissa's first newspaper, it was actually Sadhu Sundar Das who inspired the Christians in that direction. In fact the Missionaries themselves sent back glowing reports admiring Sadhu Sundar Das's innovative newspaper recognizing in it a powerful preaching tool.

At the time Cuttack was the capitol of Orissa. To this day it remains the commercial center of the State. From 1751-1803 AD the Marathas controlled Orissa. The Maratha administration of Orissa began with Raghuji Bhonsla-I as the new chief of the territory - Marathas continued to rule till 1803, the year in which the British took control. The Maratha administration is said to have proven fatal to the welfare and prosperity of the land and presents a picture of misrule, anarchy, weakness, rapacity and violence. Maratha rulers however patronized religion and religious institutions, thus making Orissa a center of attraction. Under their rule, Oriya literature made rapid progress.[VI]

[VI] **Official web portal of Government of Orissa**
http://orissa.gov.in/portal/ViewDetails.asp?vchglinkid=GL012&vchplinkid=PL048&vchslinkid=SL021

It is important to note that an intensive effort was made by the British and others to discredit and expunge the Hindu Maratha's re-conquest of India from the pages of history. Therefore accurate reports regarding the Maratha rule are difficult to come by. However none can deny that Orissa's economic and social infrastructure were in a state of dysfunction upon the arrival of the British.

The British took control of Orissa during the Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-1805) fought between the British East India Company and the Maratha Empire in India. On December 17, 1803, the Maratha ruler, Raghuji Bhonsale (II) of Nagpur signed the Treaty of Deogaon with the British. After the Battle of Laswari, in which 7,000 out of 9,000 Maratha soldiers lost their lives to the British losses of 800, the Marathas gave up control of the province of Cuttack (Orissa) including Balasore to the British.

After the imposition of British rule in 1803, the British merchants and civil servants were soon followed by the missionaries. Initially, the British East India Company refused to allow Christian Missionaries into India. *"In 1812, the missionaries appealed to the British administration to work in Orissa. The British Government rejected their appeal on the apprehension that radical missionary attacks on the traditional socio-religious institutions may provide a spark for widespread political disturbances. In 1813 with a change in British Government policy, permission was given."*[VII]

It is quite ironic that now, 200 years, later this same foresight and apprehension expressed by the early British Administrators of Orissa is now marginalized as the purview of the fanatic and fundamentalist Hindu xenophobe. The basic fact remains that conversion has frequently led to social upheaval. In 1813, upon the formation of a new government in Britain, permission was given to the missionaries to preach in India. Thus 1816 saw the arrival of the first lawfully mandated Christian missionaries. The first Christian Missionaries in Orissa were the Baptist missionaries William Bampton and James Pegg who arrived in 1816. Two years later they were joined by Amos Sutton.

At some point the missionaries met Sadhu Sundar Das. They were quite impressed with him and his newspaper. The appreciation was mutual. Initially impressed with the Christians' apparent sincerity and commitment to charitable works and education they were welcomed by most people. Sadhu Sundar Das, himself publicly invited them to serve the people of Cuttack. He shared their commitment to the monotheistic outlook and their rejection of idol worship. Their religious message, based on the teachings of a Saviour Christ was appreciated and Sadhu Sundar Das publicly recognized its appeal.

For a Hindu, the message of Jesus Christ is in synchronicity with the harmony at the heart of Hinduism. For most Hindus, Jesus Christ was a welcome addition to the altar

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[VII] **Development of Modern Education in India: An Empirical Study of Orissa**
Bina Kumari Sarma

of devotion represented by the Saints, Avatars, and Deities of the ancient Hindu traditions. Yet from the perspective of the three missionaries their efforts were tedious and unrewarding. The Oriyans stubbornly held onto their beliefs, traditions and religious convictions. Finally in 1828, a full 12 years after their arrival, the missionaries succeeded in converting two disciples of Sadhu Sundar Das to Christianity.

In a culture where an individual's choice in regards to a favored deity is a sacred and personal one, such conversions were not seen as an abandonment of Hinduism. Rather they were seen as an additional component to the all encompassing mosaic of Hindu spirituality and way of life. However the conversions of two of Sadhu Sundar Das's disciples soon led to bitterness and a sense of betrayal amongst the Hindus. For parallel to the conversion, the missionaries turned the converts against their former Guru.

Sadhu Sundar Das had willingly encouraged his disciples to give all support and assistance to the Missionaries. The preaching of the message of Christ was seen as non-threatening and a new addition to the complex multiplicity of native spirituality. The very basic teachings of Christ were familiar validations of that which is common to all good hearted people regardless of religious affiliation. Unfortunately the Christians had predated upon the very foundation of their local support base. The missionaries ordered their two converts to keep clear of Sadhu Sundar Das. After his repeated summonses were ignored, Sadhu Sundar Das realized the betrayal. Thus was developed the first fracture in the socio-religious landscape of Orissa.

Roots of Hostility

"The Charter Act of 1813 had unleashed proselytizing Christian missionaries upon India, and gradually Indians came to fear that the British wanted to convert all of India to Christianity. Sayyid Ahmad Khan complained that the famine of 1837 had been used to make orphans into Christians, and some believed the Government was reducing people to poverty so that they would adopt Christianity. In 1839 Christian missionaries petitioned the Company's government to stop supporting Hindu temples and caste regulations. The Religious Disabilities Act of 1850 made conversion easier by protecting converts from forfeiting their property or civil rights."
India & Southeast Asia to 1875

Prior to the arrival of the Christian Missionaries Bampton, Peggs and Sutton in 1816 and 1818, Christian travelers had developed a canon of lurid descriptions regarding Orissa's Jagannath Culture.

"The European, particularly the British attitude to Jagannath offers an interesting study of oscillating attitudes ranging from awe and admiration to sequential disillusionment. Viewing it initially as an amorphous idol, they made it into a despicable metaphor - Juggernaut- but soon

got boomeranged by it in their evangelical endeavors. Vilifying the immense importance of the car-festival of the Lord and ascribing to the festival a genocidal contour, they wrote from time to time about the pilgrims throwing "themselves under the chariot so that its wheels may go over them ...... And the car passes over them and crushes them and cuts them asunder, and so they perish on the spot." Conti even supplements by adding that to be "crushed to death" in such a manner was "a mode of death which they say is very acceptable to their god." Gasparo Balbi (c.1581) Bruton's aspersions (of 1632) the same insularity of vision is reflected :"Unto this Pagoda or house of Satan ...doe belong 9000 Brammines or Priests, which doe dayly offer sacrifice vnto their great God Jaggarnat, from which Idoll the city is so called.... And when it (chariot) is going along the city, there are many that will offer themselves a sacrifice to this idoll, and desperately lye down on the ground, that the Chariot wheeles may runne over them, whereby they are killed outright; some get broken armes, some broken legges, so that many of them are destroyed and by this meanes they thinke to merit Heaven."

"Bernier competes with Bruton in describing the festival in despicable terms : "In the town of Jagannat, which is seated upon the Gulf of Bengala, and where is that famous Temple of the Idol of the same name, there is yearly celebrated a certain Feast.... The first day that they shew this Idol with Ceremony in the Temple, the crowd is usually so great to see it, that there is not a year, but some of those poor pilgrims that come afar off, tired and harassed, are suffocated there; all the people blessing them for having been so happy ... And when this Hellish Triumphant Chariot marcheth, there are found (which is no Fable) persons so foolishly credulous and superstitious as to throw themselves with their bellies under those large and heavy wheels, which bruise them to death." And Hamilton echoed, in 1727, in the following vein: "His (Jagarynat's) Effigy is often carried abroad in procession, mounted on a coach four stories high .... they fasten small ropes to the cable, two or three Fathoms long, so that upwards of 2000 people have room enough to draw the coach and some old Zealots, as it passes through the street, fall flat on the ground, to have the honour to be crushed to pieces by the coach-wheels."

"The poem "Curse of Kehama" (XIV 5), in its rapturous ecstacy of ignorance, sings, in 1809, "The ponderous car rolls on, and crushes all, through flesh and bones it ploughs its dreadful path. Groans rise unheard; the dying cry." Thus, the much-maligned issue of the car-festival, started by Sebastian Manrique in 1636, continued as a harangue and against the backdrop of abortive attempts at evangelization at Puri by the Christian missionaries, came to give them a sadistic sense of "hellish triumph".

"Jagannath was described in an editorial as the 'Moloch' of India. Moloch is a Semite God who accepts child-sacrifice with glee. Woodhouse, the English novelist, is no exception to this flippancy when he says, "I felt like some unfortunate Hindu beneath the wheels of Juggernaut." Robert Southey's fictional poem on Kaiyal paints an equally ghastly sight. David Smith's report of 1847 on "Pilgrimage to Juggernaut" would talk of such suicide in moments of maddening excitement', but the bubble of gross exaggeration as inflated by Reverend Ward was pricked by

the investigating Commissioner, A.J. Mills. Prior to Mills, W.W.Hunter, Collector of Puri had also done the same. Some of them even described Jagannath as" a figure that resembled nothing in the heavens above or the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. This had impelled Maj. Thorn to visit the place and see the amiable object of veneration by millions of pilgrims, though he found the deity "disgusting".

"To Laurie, Orissa was a land of superstitions; to Kaye, the "real character of Hindooism was repulsive. Way back in June 1806, Rev. Claudius Buchanan had written about the "atrocities" at Puri, This clergy had even suggested then for the establishment of a Christian institution to undermine the impact of Jagannath. In 1813 the wolf came out of the sheep's clothing when he wrote to the court of Directors to draw their attention to the promising prospects for evangelization and conversion "into the pure religion of Jesus Christ" most of the "heathens" who gather for the "annual carnival" of car-festival in 1823 were given a thousand copies of the Gospel, translated to Oriya were distributed by William Bampton and James Peggs. The effort drew a blank."

"Reinforced though in their ranks by Charles Lacey and Amos Sutton, they could hardly make any inroads. Bampton's pamphlet, "Folly of the Worship of Jagannath" only brought the initially promising but finally spiteful proposition of Sadhu Sundar Das. What had irked the Christian Missionaries about Jagannath was that here, at Puri, "is the national temple whither the people flock for worship from every province of India.

Here is the Swarga Dwara, the Gate of Heaven where thousands of pilgrims come to die, lulled to their last sleep by the roar of the eternal ocean. The sight of singular devotion to a single god by millions who are unwavered in their allegiance in spite of the best efforts of the missionaries rendered the perspective of mirage to the missionaries.

Grapes became sour and disillusioned the likes of Peggs and Bampton. Bampton's "forlorn hope" to plant the banner of the Cross within the precincts of Juggernaut's temple is vengefully vented by Peggs to whom "Juggernaut, the grat, the obscene, the bloody Juggernaut, must fall; Long perhaps will be the struggle and fierce the conflict but he must fall; and the place which knows him now will know him no more for ever." History scoffs at Peggs today when, in the heart of his country, thousands throng to celebrate a miniature replica, Lord Jagannath's car-festival and the Lord seems to permeate the will and intellect of an ever-increasing number of his followers in the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic races. It seems the missionaries outnumbered the converts. Stray are instances of conversion, as of 'Lokhun' Das who tore his sacred-thread to declare his conversion."

"While the list of missionary's along with the 'date of their embarkation' is quite a long one. The missionaries skepticism found a scape-goat in the government; "if the government does not forsake Juggernaut how can you expect that we should?, was someone's curt reply to Bampton and the acrimony was the result of a vision blurred, perhaps, by the crocodile tears over the issue. The spectacle of thousands thronging the car-festival irrespective of caste-class distinctions paled into obscurity the Christian missionary message that God was the father of all mankind and that

therefore there was a brotherhood of man. So lamented Sutton, out of typical Christian disillusionment, "your prayers can not pierce this gloom nor your labours open an avenue sufficient to let down a ray of heaven's light on this idolatrous province"…." Peggs was more candid in his admission, "Orissa presented a challenge to the missionaries since it contained the temple of Jagannath, the Mecca of Hindustan, the Sebastapol of Hindu idolatry" (J.Peggs, A Brief Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Cuttack, London, 1854, p-4). The strong bond of "Mahaprasad brotherhood" among the Oriyas was deliberated upon in the British Parliament in January, 1873. In 1817, Robert Ker, in his report, described the Oriyas as rude and ignorant in the eyes of the British. [VIII]

In 1806 Christian Missionary Claudius Buchanan had described Orissa as "the wide and extended empire of the Moloch in the heathen world." His claims made in his *'Christian Researches in Asia'* were calculated exaggerations and outright falsifications, "We know we are approaching Juggernaut by the human bones which we have seen for some days strewn by the way." O there is no Pity in Juggernaut! No mercy, no tenderness of heart in Moloch's Kingdom!" the characteristics of Moloch's worship is obscenity and blood!" His report published in 1811 presents a lurid and blatant example of anti-Hindu propaganda. Interestingly the same kind of propaganda continues to plague many modern commentators on India.

"In sight of Juggernaut, 12th June, 1806 "We know that we are approaching Juggernaut (and yet we are more than fifty miles from it) by the human bones which we have seen for some days strewed by the way. At this place we have been joined by several large bodies of pilgrims, perhaps 2000 in number, who have come from various parts of Northern India. Some of them, with whom 1 have conversed, say that they have been two months on their march travelling slowly in the hottest season of the year, with their wives and children. Some old persons are among them who wish to die at Juggernaut. Numbers of pilgrims die on the road; and their bodies generally remain unburied. On a plain by the river, near the Pilgrim's Caravansera at this place, there are more than a hundred skulls. The dogs, jackals, and vultures, seem to live here on human prey. The vultures exhibit a shocking tameness. The obscene animals will not leave the body sometimes till we come close to them. This Buddruck is a horrid place. Wherever! Turn my eyes; I meet death in some shape or another. Surely Juggernaut cannot be worse than Buddruck……

"I have seen Juggernaut. The scene at Buddruck is but the vestibule to Juggernaut. No record of ancient or modern history can give, I think, an adequate idea of this valley of death; it may be truly compared with the "valley of Hinnom." The idol called Juggernaut, has been considered as the Moloch of the present age ; and he is justly so named, for the sacrifices offered up to him by

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VIII **Lord Jagannath and the Bicker of the British During 19th Century** Jasmine Patnaik, Himanshu Patnaik, Orisssa Review July 2003 http://orissagov.nic.in/e-magazine/Orissareview/july2003/englishchpter/Lord%20Jagannath%20and%20the%20Bicker%20of%20the%20British%20During%2019th%20Century.pdf

self-devotement, are not less criminal, perhaps not less numerous, than those recorded of the Moloch of Canaan. Two other idols accompany Juggernaut, namely, Boloram and Shubudra, his brother and sister…

"The characteristics of Moloch's worship are obscenity and blood. We have seen the former. Now comes the blood… After the tower had proceeded some way, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice to the idol. He laid himself down in the road before the tower as it was moving along, lying on his face, with

*his arms stretched forwards. The multitude passed round him, leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the God. He is said to smile when the libation of the blood is made. The people threw cowries, or small money, on the body of the victim, in approbation of the deed. He was left to view a considerable time, and was then carried by the Hurries to the Golgotha, where I have just been viewing his remains. How much I wished that the Proprietors of India Stock could have attended the wheels of Juggernaut, and seen this peculiar source of their revenue/ Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood * Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears." MILTON, * The horrid solemnities still continue. Yesterday a woman devoted herself to the idol. She laid herself down on the road in an oblique direction, so that the wheel did not kill her instantaneously, as is generally the case; but she died in a few hours. This morning as I passed the Place of Skulls, nothing remained of her but her bones."*

"I beheld another distressing scene this morning at the Place of Skulls; a poor woman lying dead, or nearly dead, and her two children by her, looking at the dogs and vultures which were near. The people passed by without noticing the children. I asked them where was their home. They said, they had no home but where their mother was. O, there is no pity in Juggernaut! No mercy, no tenderness of heart in Moloch's kingdom! Those who support his kingdom, err, I trust, from ignorance. (They know not what they do.' I felt my mind relieved and happy when I had passed beyond the confines of Juggernaut. I certainly was not prepared for this scene. But no one can know what it is who has not seen it. From an eminence on the pleasant banks of the Chilka Lake (where no human bones are seen) I had a view of the lofty tower of Juggernaut far remote; and while I viewed it, its abominations came to mind. It was on the morning of the Sabbath. Ruminating long on the wide and extended empire of Moloch in the heathen world, I cherished in my thoughts the design of some 6 Christian Institution, which, being fostered by Britain, my Christian country, might gradually undermine this baleful idolatry, and pit out the memory of it forever.'* [IX]

From these descriptions it is quite obvious that Bampton, Peggs and Sutton arrived with preconceived notions of native degradation and thus brought with them an adamant

[IX] **"Christian researches in Asia : with notices of the translation of the Scriptures into the oriental languages"** Claudius Buchanan 1811

will to 'save' the people of Orissa from their heathen nightmare and condition. At first they began their efforts by offering education to the people.

By the time the British took control of Orissa, its education system was in complete disarray. Only available on a specialty basis, the vast majority of the public had little or no access to education. It can be said without doubt, that the foundation of the modern era in Orissa began with the Christian missionaries. In particular, their efforts to provide education through schools and the translations of various scientific books and treatises opened up a vast panorama of knowledge and information to the people of Orissa. However, according to their own records and statements these efforts by the Christians were not done for the mere education of the masses. They saw education as an 'auxiliary to preaching'. In the Asiatic Observer they wrote, *"Before we can reasonably hope to that the Hindus will be converted into Christ, it is necessary that they should be capable of understanding of what the missionary preaches them."*

We find evidence of this in the writings of British Lord Macaulay. The infamous Minute which Macaulay wrote in 1835 remained unpublished till 1864. His nephew Sir George Otto Trevelyan first published it in Macmillan's Magazine of May, 1864. Macaulay proudly records: *"We are at present a Board for Printing Books which are of less value than the paper on which they are printed was when it was blank, and for giving artificial encouragement's to absurd history, absurd metaphysics, absurd physics, and absurd theology." Macaulay's motives behind his educational policy were not only political but religious as well as revealed in his letter of 1836 addressed to his father. ".... The effect of this education on the Hindus is prodigious. No Hindu who has received an English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion. Some continue to profess it as a matter of policy, but many profess themselves pure Deists and some embrace Christianity. It is my firm belief if our plans of education are followed up there will not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence."* The comment on this letter by The Indian Daily News for March 30, 1909, is very significant. It says: "Lord Macaulay's triumph over the Oriental School,.... was really the triumph of the deliberate intention to undermine the religious and social life of India.....It is no doubt a hard thing to say that this was not merely the consequence of his act but that it was also his deliberate intention, but the.... letter written in 1836, to his father shows how behind his splendid phrases, there lay quite a different view."[x]

No one doubts the sincerity and commitment of these Missionaries to the word of Christ, yet unfortunately they displayed a deep and visible hostility to Orissa's Jagannath Culture. Thus a parallel track of hostility ran side by side with their educational and evangelical efforts. As early as 1817, within just one year of their arrival in Orissa a missionary paper was issued throughout India. It highlighted Orissa's

[x] **Mission Impossible** 'Putting an End to Conversion Activity' M.V. Kamath

Jagannath Culture in derogatory terms as ridiculous. It was labeled as *'Juggernaut Exposed*.'[XI] Bampton himself, as noted earlier, wrote an Oriya pamphlet entitled as '*The Folly of the Worship of Jagannath*.' The records clearly expose the virulent animosity and angst that was at the heart of early Christianity in Orissa.

Some may argue that such perspectives of a bygone era from a people long gone do not have significance upon the current state of affairs. Yet such a view ignores the burden of history. It denies the societal impact of prejudice. It dismisses the obvious destructive capabilities of prejudice, hostile intent and words. Calculated words and agendas committed to undermining the traditional socio-political and religious foundations of a society and its people have an undeniable impact. No one can rightfully deny this. For a people whose very identity is interwoven with their religion such brutal attacks and agendas cause turmoil. Such a perspective obfuscates the foundational beginnings of Christianity in Orissa and aggravates the problems at hand.

[XI] **Was Hinduism Invented?** Brian K. Pennington

Missionary Papers

FOR THE USE OF THE

WEEKLY AND MONTHLY CONTRIBUTORS

TO THE

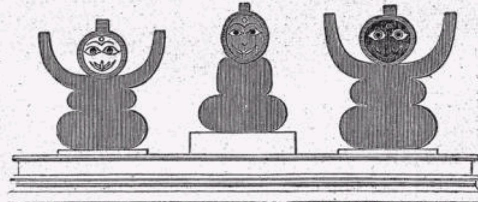
CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.



CHRISTIAN FRIENDS—

You may well ask, " What strange figure is this ?"—We will tell you. Perhaps you have heard of an Idol worshipped by millions of your own fellow-subjects in India, called JUGGERNAUT. The poor people make different figures of this Idol. This is one of them. But you see him dressed up here. The Brahmins, or Priests, have put what they think fine clothes upon him.

We will now shew you another form of him before he is clothed, and the forms of his supposed Brother and Sister.



BOLORAM, Brother of Juggernaut. *SHUBUDRA,* Sister of Juggernaut. *JUGGERNAUT.*

" What! are these monstrous and ridiculous figures the gods of the Heathen ?"—Indeed they are. Boloram is supposed to be the brother of Juggernaut, and Shubudra to be their sister.

FIGURE 3.6. "Juggernaut" exposed, from the Church Missionary Society *Missionary Papers*, Lady Day, 1817.

Applying this same formula of denial or trivialization would mean to forgo the efforts in bringing justice and peace to the various traumatized communities the world over. The American Indians and all other Indigenous people of North and South America, the Irish, the Jews, the Armenians, the Turks, the Greeks, the Koreans, Aborigines of Australia, the Hawaiians, the Maoris of New Zealand, the Africans, the Crusader driven angst of the Muslims,

the Serbs, Croats, the American Blacks, the Palestinians, the Arab Jews, the Persians, the Kurds, the Iraqis and others all have valid and justifiable claims based upon their histories. In fact it is their historical victimization at the hands of politically, economically and militarily empowered entities that is at the very basis of their current struggles and identities. These traumas cannot be separated from who they are and how they function in modern society. Entire government entities and UN bodies are dedicated to their upliftment in obvious recognition of their past trauma. Vast sums of money and projects have been developed towards such efforts. In most cases these same groups were victims of the very same powers that carried forth very similar agendas in India.

The British conquered Orissa in 1803 and brought with them the very same prejudices and derision of native culture that was a common feature throughout their Empire. The negative impact of such a mentality was reflected by the alienation of the native people who in most cases had welcomed them. Thus it was in Orissa. The seeds of resentment were planted in the hearts and minds of the public. They developed an intensely deep mistrust and disdain for the British and the missionaries. Many refused to send their children to their schools. In particular most Muslim and Hindus did not allow their daughters to attend Christian schools out of concern that they would be manipulated against the religions of their birth. The Christians were quickly identified as another arm of the all consuming British Empire. Their public displays of derision of Jagannath by distribution of anti-Jagannath literature and encouraging their converts to damage Jagannath icons caused outrage.

The "*Brief Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Baptist Church Orissa Mission*," Mission Press, Cuttack, 1858, praised an early Oriya Christian convert Gunga Dhor for testing the divinity of Jagannath by abusing 'him' and scratching 'his' back with a pointed iron, since he had not responded to his petition [XII]

Early Christians in Orissa also spread tales of lascivious sexuality as a component of Jagannath worship. The Rathayatra festival, they claimed, was always accompanied by hundreds of dancing girls who sang ribald songs and made lewd gestures in an attempt to invoke lust in the crowds and please the heathen Gods. The powerful British Christian leader, William Wilberfore the 'Great' advocated the Christianization of India through the use of brute State power. He issued a demand that the Jagannath temple be immediately demolished to put an end to the 'devil-dance' once and for all. The British Commissioner of Puri saved the situation by writing a letter to a liberal British M.P. He vouched for the civil and sacred nature of the Jagannath Rathayatra festival and stated that in the 20 years he had been there, neither he nor any other British citizen had ever

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[XII] **Identity, Hegemony, Resistance:Conversions In Orissa, 1800-2000** Dr Biswamoy Pati

witnessed a single human sacrifice victim under the wheels nor anything immodest in the songs and symbolic gestures of the dancing girls.

Corporations of Bigotry

> *"A numerous body is coming forward in society possessing far more enlightened notions than their fathers did; a body of men, who put little faith in the Shastras (Hindu texts), and look upon the old pundits and teachers as ignorant bigots. The great contrast between these two parties shows how great a step has been made in the process of public enlightenment. The spirit, in which Bible truth is heard, has also greatly improved. Formerly, when a missionary preached, he was compelled to enter into disagreeable and apparently useless controversies; the same objections were brought forward again and again; and the discussion was frequently closed, with the practical application of broken pots, sand, dirt and cries of 'Haribol!' But now, in all the older missionary stations and even beyond them, discussions seldom occur. The people come to the chapels, and often listen to the end: frequently acknowledging aloud the truth of what is said."*[XIII]

"There were indeed some Englishmen in India as well as in England who were sincere admirers of Hindu culture and convinced that Christianity had nothing to teach to the Hindus. They presented their case forcefully in the British Parliament when the Charter of the East India Company came up for renewal in 1813. *"A number of people,"* writes Dr. R.C. Majumdar, *"including William Wilberforce, sought to refute these arguments by painting in black colors the horrible customs of the Hindus such as sati, infanticide, throwing the children into the Ganga, religious suicides, and above all, idolatry. Vivid descriptions were given of the massacre of the innocents resulting from the car procession of Lord Jagannath at Puri, and the Baptists put down the number of annual victims at not less than 120,000. 'When challenged they had to admit that they did not actually count the dead bodies but arrived at the figure by an ingenious calculation."*[XIV]

It was primarily through the efforts of this very same Christian Triumphalist William Wilberforce, who had called for the destruction of the Jagannath Temple, that the Christian Missionaries were given full freedom to enter India and propagate their creed. Hostility against Oriya culture is at the very foundation of Christianity in Orissa. British records verify this to be a fact. The threats posed by the Christian missionaries upon the peaceful administration of India were considered more dangerous than the pending invasion and designs of Napoleon against the British in India.

[XIII] **The administration of the East India company; a history of Indian progress, '**Mr Mullins' Sir John William Kaye 1853

[XIV] **History Of Hindu-Christian Encounters** Encounter With Raja Ram Mohun Roy Sita Ram Goel

"I can assure you that I do not feel so much anxiety and apprehension from the menaced designs of (Napoleon) Buonaparte, as from the plans which have become so fashionable amongst the (Christian) Puritans of the India House"

In the 1853 publication *The administration of the East India Company; a history of Indian progress,* in the chapter entitled *Christian Terrors* the author Sir John William Kaye writes, *"….taken from a letter now before me, written in 1808, by one of the most intelligent officers in the Company's service -a resident at a native court- to a high civil functionary in Calcutta. The reference, also, in this case is to the rumored invasion of Napoleon (of India.): "I must cordially assent to all the sentiments you express of the impolicy, or rather madness, of attempting the conversion of the natives of this country….With respect to the Hindoos, they appear to me to have as good a system of faith and of morals as most people; and with regard to the Moosulmans (Muslims), it is quite sufficient if we endeavor to conciliate their confidence, and to mitigate their vindictive spirit. Sir William Jones has in a very few words given us a correct outline of the only system of government adapted to this country-"To give them (The Hindoos) protection for their persons and places of abode; justice in their temporal concerns; indulgence to the prejudices of their religion; and the benefit of those laws, which they have been taught to believe sacred, and which alone they can possibly comprehend'-I can assure you that I do not feel so much anxiety and apprehension from the menaced designs of (Napoleon) Buonaparte, as from the plans which have become so fashionable amongst the (Christian) Puritans of the India House. This alarm has been chiefly excited by the perusal of some pamphlets, which have been lately published in London, and have been issued from your Bible Societies, your Christian Societies, and other corporations of bigotry. You have a Mr. or Dr. Buchanan –an officer of your College, who appears to me to have done a great deal of harm. For the prizes, which he presumed to offer for certain Exercises at the University of Cambridge, I am convinced that he is a man of wretched and most un-Christian like vanity. I do not even approve of your zeal in the translation of the Bible and New Testament into I know not how many languages. The Scriptures may appear very admirable to us, who are prepared to venerate them as the instrument of revelation. But I do not think they are calculated to excite respect and admiration in the garb of translations, in the minds of men who are prepared to deny their truth."*

This insightful company officer who had to live and govern Indian affairs on a daily basis had called the missionaries and *'Bible Societies, Christian Societies'* as *'Corporations of Bigotry'*. No stronger condemnation could be given. This declaration came neither from a Hindu fanatic nor Muslim fundamentalist but rather from the observations of a Christian British Officer. Christian Missionary Claudius Buchanan, in his zeal to convert all of India to Christianity, urged the Administration to flood India with Clergymen. Claiming that the conversion of Hindoostan would be the best defense against an invasion by Napoleon, he identified conversion with geo-political goals. This

is a kind of verification of those modern day fears alleging that Indian Christianity may indeed be a threat to National sovereignty.

Buchanan stated that rather than sending an army of 50,000 British soldiers, the sending of 500 clergymen to India would be more effective in stopping Napoleon. *"It is certain, he said, "that nothing would more alarm the portentous invader of nations (Napoleon) than our taking a religious possession of Hindustan. 500 respectable clergy of the English Church, established in our Gentoo* (archaic term for Indian Hindu) *cities, would more perplex his views of conquest than an army of 50,000 British soldiers. The army of 50,000 would melt away in seven years; but the influence of an upright clergyman among the natives of the district, would be permanent. He would be to them in time their mouth and their mind, and speak for them peace or war."* (Letter from Buchanan to the Archbishop of Canterbury.) [XV]

In 1813, during the British House of Commons Parliamentary hearings on the renewal of the British East India Company charter, many serious concerns and questions were raised regarding conversion. William Wilberforce and Lord Teigenmouth led the efforts in the defense of conversion. The Committees' examination of Lord Teigenmouth is illuminating and reveals the political pressures caused by the tactics of the Christians. *"Would it be consistent with the security of the British Empire in India that missionaries should preach publicly, with the view to the conversion of the native Indians, that Mohamet is an imposter, or should speak in opprobrious terms of the Brahmins, or their religious rites?" Lord Teigenmouth replied, that there might be danger in such indiscretion; The Committee asked again," Is your Lordship aware that an opinion exists in India, that it is the intention of the British Government to make means to convert the natives of the country to the Christian religion?" Lord Teigenmouth claimed ignorance. "I have never heard it, or suspected it." The Committee continued with this line of questioning, "Were the Hindoos possessed with an idea that we had an intention of changing their religion and converting them into Christians, would it be intended with any bad consequences at all?" Lord Teignemouth claimed it would be met with indifference. Not satisfied with his answer the Committee challenged him, " Should the State of things be altered, and we not observe the conduct we have hitherto observed (in banning missionary activities in India) but introduce new modes, and enact new laws, for carrying into effect the conversion of the natives to Christianity, would not that be attended with disagreeable consequences?" Lord Teigenmouth was unable to deny the negative impact of such a move and replied, "…I have no hesitation in saying that, in that case, it would be attended with very great danger."* Christian leader, William Wilberforce remained obstinate and savaged the members of the House of Commons for their line of questioning. *In a letter to Lord Wellesley he wrote, " Your Lordship can scarcely conceive, if I may judge of the House of Lords from the general condition of the members of the House of*

[XV] **The administration of the East India company; a history of Indian progress,** Sir John William Kaye 1853

Commons, how ignorant in general their lordships are likely to be regarding India, and therefore how little they are qualified to ask questions in committee."[XVI]

We see this same obstinacy flourishing in modern Indian Politics. Any time a committee, commission or panel contradicts the scripts of certain vested interests, they are publicly declared as unreliable and prejudiced. William Wilberforce and his allies eventually overcame their opponents. With the addition of the 'Pious Clause' to the British East India Company charter of 1813, missionary and conversionary activities became an accepted part of British policy. 100 years later, the same mindset was still at work. Sir Andrew Fraser, the Lt Governor of Bengal wrote in 1912, "*To give them civilization without Christianity is to withhold that which our civilization owes all that is best in it and by which alone it can be kept pure and beautiful*."[XVII] In other words he believed that the best option for the future of India lay in the promotion of Christianity and the conversion of the Indians.

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Prominent among those few were British missionaries. They commissioned and purchased Hindu religious images, and occasionally acquired them as byproducts of successful conversions. In his biography of Reverend Alphonse Lacroix, Joseph Mullens (1862: 66–70) narrates a dramatic example of this.[14] One of Lacroix's fellow missionaries, Reverend Samuel Trawin, was preaching one day near the Kalighat temple south of Calcutta when he was challenged by a "sturdy-looking farmer" and two companions. A discussion on the relative merits of Hinduism and Christianity ensued, and the Reverend found that Ramjee Pramanik, the largest landholder in Rammakal Chowk, an area then eight miles south of Calcutta, was an eager student. Finally, after many further conversations, Ramjee and his two friends accepted baptism on October 18, 1825. Trawin began preaching in Rammakal Chowk and decided to build a chapel there. The new convert Ramjee decided to help the project along.

> On one portion of his land stood a small temple of Shiva; it was a kind of family-temple, and the brahmin in charge received more support from the family than from anyone else. As it was his own property Ramjee determined to pull it down and give its materials for a place of Christian worship. . . . On a certain day in the presence of a great crowd who manifested much excitement, Ramjee brought out the idol, and flung it to the ground. The brahmin exclaimed in horror, almost in the language of Micah: "Ye have taken away my god, and what have I more?" (Mullens 1862: 68)

The missionaries recycled the temple materials to construct their new Christian chapel, and they dispatched the image of Śiva, weighing several hundred pounds, to the home office of the London Missionary Society, where it would be placed on display as a heathen idol.[15] [XVIII]

The example cited above gives us a clear outline of the mentality of both the missionaries and their converts. It also reveals the consternation and dismay of the

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[XVI] **Ibid.**

[XVII] **Among Indian Rajahs and Ryots** pg 279 Sir Andrew Fraser 1912

[XVIII] **Lives of Indian Images** pg 160 Richard H. Davis

Hindu dedicated to his traditions. Already fractured by caste, class, tribal and non-tribal, India thus saw the development of yet another division in Indian society. The rise of the politically empowered aggressive Indian Christian saw the development a new fault line. What had been a fracture now became a chasm.

Fractures and Fault lines

"The problem is rooted in the socio-demographic history of the district. The starting point can be traced to the 1940s, when the erstwhile Boudh-Kandhamal district came into being. On one side are the Kandha tribals, and on the other, the Christian Dalit Panas. Divisions between the simple and affable Kandha (Scheduled Tribe) and the smart and shrewd Panas (Scheduled Caste), who now enjoy a position of economic superiority, have grown sharply over the decades."

Bringing the focus back to the Kandhamal District of Orissa we find two distinct communities. These are the Panas and the Kandhas. Some media outlets, including premier news agencies such as the New York Times, have erroneously portrayed both of these groups as indigenous to the Kandhamal region. However, according to the world's leading anthropologists and experts on India's tribal history, the Panas are recent migrants to the region. This view is confirmed by a recent 10 year study done on the spectrum of Hemoglobinopathies in the State of Orissa. According to this research, released in 2004, the same erythrocytic prevalence of genetic abnormalities of hemoglobin is quite high in Kshatriyas, Brahmin, Karan, Gauda and Pana peoples. Based on the migratory accounts available there were three major waves of migrations into Orissa. They came through three different corridors into the State. These are the North, East and West. The hemoglobin markers of the Pana clearly identify them as one of these migratory groups. The tribes of Orissa have very different blood markers. Of these, the Kandhas are one, but due to intermarriage they share a higher percentage of the migratory group's hemoglobin patterns than the more remote tribal groups. However the Kandhas have hemoglobin markers much more in common with their neighboring tribes than with the Panas or other groups. The Panas share common blood pathologies with the upper caste migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andra Pradesh, Maharashtra and the Chattisgarh regions formerly known as Gondwana land. *"These results further testify that the hereditary disorders of hemoglobin are more prevalent among the general Castes and Scheduled Castes than among the Tribals of Orissa."*[XIX] It therefore appears that science confirms the Kandha identification of the Panas as recent migrants to Kandhamal.

According to Kandha tribal legend, the Pana community migrated to the Kandhamal region from the Ghumsar area. They were exiled when the King of Ghumusar estate

[XIX] **Spectrum of hemoglobinopathies in the state of orissa : A ten years cohort study** Singh A. K. ; Balgir R. S, Journal of Association of Physicians of India

punished them for their criminal activities. This is said to have been during the early phase of the British era. A statement in this regard was made by some of the current Kandha leaders, Janmejaya Mallik, Dullabha Pradhan and Subhash Kumar. If this is a fact it would mean the Panas are quite recent immigrants to the area. If it is not a historical fact it is strong evidence confirming the strong antipathy of the Kandhas towards the Pana. The question, however, can be answered by turning towards the historical records.

According to the Orissa District Gazetteer, *"In Kandhamals the Panas were the serfs of the Kandhas. They worked on their farms and wove their clothes in return for which they got a small area of land, grain for food and the cost of marriage expenses. The Panas, being more familiar with the outside world, acted as intermediaries and thus began to exploit the tribals economically."* According to Lambodhar Kanhar, the current chief of the Kandhamal Kandhas, *"The Panas, these Dalits, are criminal by nature. Initially they helped the tribals. But when the number of the Panas started increasing, they began cheating us."*[XX] From the perspective of the Kandhas, the Panas were tolerated newcomers who provided some benefit to their economic infrastructure and socio-religious practices.

The relations between the Panas and the Kandhas have a history of turbulence. The grievances appear to be based in a common brutal legacy. Records show that human sacrifice was practiced amongst the Kandhas. However it appears that reports of such practices were intentionally exaggerated by the British as a rationale for conquest. According to these reports, human sacrifice did indeed take place but it was not necessarily a Kandha-centric occurrence. Local Zamindars (land owners) and administrators participated in the gruesome practice. Another chapter will clarify that human sacrifice appears to have been a heresy against the original Kandha faith centered upon the Supreme God of Light, Boro Penu.

The official story goes that human sacrifice was a regular feature of Kandha ritual. However they never sacrificed their own. Therefore an arrangement was made with the Panas to procure victims on a regular basis. The Panas, in their roles as middlemen between the Kandhas and the outside world, are said to have developed an industry based on the capture of children. These children were then sold to the Kandhas for their human sacrifice rituals. Whether this was a common feature of the Kandha-Pana relationship or not there is no doubt some truth to the reports. Even today the Panas continue to monopolize the sale of buffaloes meant for Kandha sacrifice rituals. Before the British banned human sacrifice it was definitely practiced by a section of Kandhas. The victims were called Meriah and the Panas were the agents or middlemen in procuring the Meriah victims.

[XX] **Tehelka** Vol 5 # 41 October 18, 2008

The historian Dashrathi Swaro referring to British Government reports and records wrote, *"The Kandhas purchased the Meriah victims. Unless bought for a price, they were not deemed acceptable to the Earth Goddess, Dharani Penu. Victims from their own tribe were not procurable. The agents, mainly Panas, a clever and business like people lived with the Kandhas and cheated the Kandhas in all possible ways."* [XXI] The British used the excuse of stamping out human sacrifice to declare an all out war against the troublesome and rebellious Kandhas. Nevertheless, it is a fact that many Meriah victims were rescued by the British from both Pana and Kandha villages. Once rescued, the meriah victims were deemed unsuitable for sacrifice and were thus safe from recapture.

It was during this period that the Panas made a momentous choice that would have significant implications for generations to come. *"It could be to escape the wrath of the British Government or in an effort to remain safe from the reaction of the Kandhas that the Panas gradually came closer to the Christian missionaries and eventually converted to the Christian faith."*

Indeed, The Panas were the prime target of the Christian missionaries who, in 1883, had settled in the village of Katingia, in the Daringibadi block of the Kandhamal district. Interestingly, it was within the very next year that the British were finally able to subdue the Kandhas of Kandhamal. This was accomplished with the help of the Christian converted Pana of the neighboring Ganjam and Nayagarh districts bordering the Kandhamal.

For the Kandhas, Christianity was closely associated and identified with the British colonial powers that they had battled in at least 8 different wars. In their eyes the Missionaries were the priests and Shamans of the British whose frequent attacks and policies had devastated their culture and brought chaos to their socio-political landscape. The Panas conversion to the religion of their enemies was seen as a treacherous betrayal. Already treated as barely tolerated newcomers, their conversion to a foreign faith identified them with the hated British. This served to reinforce the Panas' status as 'the outsiders' in the eyes of the Kandha community.

The recent violence (Aug-Oct 2008) is neither the first nor the only incident of violence between the two groups. There are various and deep rooted problems that led to the recent clashes. 1994 saw a major outbreak of violence between the two communities. A Hindu Pana visit to a Kandha Shiva temple was the spark. Outraged by the Pana's visit, some Kandhas felt that he had desecrated their sacred ground. The Kandhas responded by performing a cleansing ritual of the temple. Word of this angered the Panas, Hindu and Christian alike. Quoting an early 1960s regulation that gave them the right of entry

[XXI] **Christian Missionaries in Orissa,** Dashrathi Swaro

to any Hindu temple the outraged Panas felt their rights had been violated. Violence soon followed. Tit for tat killings and acts of arson consumed the district.

Another major development had also impacted the situation. Kandhamal had formerly been named Phulbani. In 1994 the Government of Orissa renamed the district as Kandhamal in an effort to placate the Kandhas. Unfortunately this brought consternation and anger to the Panas. The violence that erupted during the 1994 riots was district wide. Churches and homes were burnt and people killed.

While many theories are bandied about, the pattern indicates that the violence was no accident. When the Christian Pana suffer a setback in their political agenda they engage in some act designed to upset the equilibrium of the Kandhas. Thus the 'innocent' visit by a Hindu Pana to a Kandha Shiva temple appears to have been a calculated move. It may very well have been part of a planned Christian Pana response. It served as a form of protest against the State Government's acquiescence to Kandha demands to rename the district as Kandhamal.

Expressing the Christian Pana perspective Paramachand Digal states, *"For centuries these tribals made untouchables of us and treated us like animals. Now they think they can frighten us into going back to that life."* This clearly highlights the Christian Pana rationale for the struggle for protection and privilege. Whether such status could be achieved during the British era through conversion or through the Indian Government's reservation system, the Christian Panas long struggle continues to this very day. The Christian Pana have repeatedly thrown down the gauntlet and the Kandhas, recognizing the Christian efforts as a threat to their very identity, have returned the challenge.

The Battle over Identity

"In relation to the communal disturbance that erupted in the tribal dominated district of Kandhamal, Orissa on 24 December 2007 between tribal Hindus (Kui) and Christians (Panas), the Indian delegation noted that the underlying cause appeared to be the long standing opposition by the tribal Hindus to the Christians' demand to be categorized as a Scheduled Tribe." Indian Delegation-UN General Assembly March 2008 Universal Periodic Review

According to the Indian Constitution, the Panas are identified as belonging to the Scheduled Caste grouping. The Kandhas are Scheduled Tribes. Based upon a questionable policy, that classifies citizens into various groups upon an ethnic basis, the government doles out favors. These include anything from money to academic and government posts. In this system, a member of an 'underprivileged' class can take advantage of many benefits regardless of need. On the other hand a desperately poor member of the upper caste is denied access to this system. They do not qualify for assistance. Regardless of need, some Indians harness the public largesse based solely on

their ethnic, community or caste classification. Tribes a have a unique place in this system and a separate classification and set of rules apply to them. Thus the scheduled tribal person is guaranteed benefits and reservations regardless of his or her religious identity or status. A member of the scheduled caste communities, however, can only take advantage of the benefits available as long as they belong to the Hindu, Sikh or Buddhist religions. This formula is based on the simple premise that the caste system is unique to the Indic based traditions. This is also in accordance with the stated doctrine of Christianity and Islam. In fact a major selling point, amongst these two faiths, is their alleged denial and rejection of the caste system.

According to this doctrine, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists that convert are liberated from the social burdens represented by the Hindu Caste System. Therefore in recognition of this point, the Indian Constitution states, *"No person who professes a religion different from the Hindu, the Sikh or the Buddhist religion shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste."* [XXII] Jains were added at a later point. This rule has had a significant impact on the Christian Pana of Kandhamal. Unwilling to forgo the benefits of being a member of a scheduled caste despite having been allegedly '*liberated through Christ*' from their plight as members of a disenfranchised caste, the Christian Panas embarked upon a path of questionable legality.

The very purpose of the Scheduled caste system is to uplift lower caste Hindus, and other Indic-based traditions with a legacy of Castism, from their socially backward plight. It was designed and crafted as a response towards ending thousands of years of entrenched caste prejudice. However Islam and Christian conversion has long been championed as a path to freedom. It is touted as a quick and effective path towards emancipation from the oppression and stigmatization represented by the caste system. Thus the very purpose for of the Indian Constitution's Scheduled Caste system is being fulfilled by the act of conversion. If this is not the case, then it is time to abandon the accusations against Hinduism as an oppressive caste based religion. This would prove that the caste system has nothing to do with the Hindu religion but everything to do with socio-political and economic conditions.

However according to the Christians, Muslims, social scientists, secularists and others, the Caste system is a Hindu based social evil. Conversion to an Abrahamic faith is championed as a means to escape the clutches of this Hindu evil. In honor of this idea and concept of the liberating impacts of conversion, the Indian Constitution recognizes such converts as free of any caste obligations or identifications. In other words the Indian Constitution's very objective towards the upliftment of the 'caste oppressed' citizen has been fulfilled by the good efforts of the Christian and Muslim activists.

[XXII] **The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 (C.O.19)**

Interestingly Mother Teresa, in keeping with Church doctrine, disagreed with the attempts to identify Christians as S.C. (Scheduled Caste). *"When the National Coordination Committee for Scheduled Caste Christians decided to call for reservation for Dalit Christians and admitted that even the Church discriminated against the converted Christians who had been Dalits, Mother Teresa got involved in a controversy she did not want at all. However, having accepted the invitation, later, Mother Teresa denied that she had ever agreed to attend and claimed she was misled into it. The Dalit Christians thought they had a strong lobbyist in Mother Teresa. She backed out making then angry. The Dalit Christians' episode badly embarrassed her and lost her some friends."*[XXIII]

During the first round table conference of 1931, Indian Christian leader and freedom fighter Dr. Paul refused when Congress offered Indian Christians reservation on par with Anglo-Indian community. His foresight has ensured that today a majority of the Christian community are thus part of the Indian mainstream.

In contradiction of Mother Teresa and Dr. Paul, some Christian groups actively encourage converts to keep their caste identity.

"Another guideline that is given while converting SC/ST and Backward classes is that no written document evidencing the conversion should be given to them. Instead of telling them that they are being 'converted', they should be told that they are only 'changing their mind' and are following the teachings of Jesus Christ. No changes are to be effected in their education or other certificates as this change will deprive them of the facilities they are getting from the Government. When the Hindu organizations pointed out that SC/ST and Backward classes continue to enjoy the concession even after conversion, the churches were denying this: but in this booklet, this fact has been inadvertently accepted."[XXIV]

The goal of the Scheduled Caste clause of the Constitution is the removal of the caste system and the social baggage and prejudice that comes with it. Thus despite achieving this goal through conversion to Christianity, the Christian Panas cling to benefits designed for those still suffering under the oppressive weight of the caste system. Despite achieving freedom through their alleged commitment to Christ they demand the help meant for those still imprisoned within the Hindu system. This is blatantly evident when we recognize that in the past 40 years there have been only two official conversions to Christianity in the region. Yet in the 2001 census we find that Kandhamal's Christian population exploded to 117,950. The various churches involved in this conversion drive have been complicit partners in the willful manipulation of the system.

[XXIII] **Mother Teresa** pg 77 B.K. Chaturvedi

[XXIV] **Approach to combat Anti Conversion Law** published by Minority Gospel Rights Protection Forum in Simmakkal, Madurai, Tamilnadu

Despite having baptismal records of every convert, never once did the Church authorities submit the names to the local authorities of the Scheduled Caste-Scheduled Tribe department. The law is quite clear regarding this yet the Church shirked the law. In the United States of America this would be tantamount to welfare fraud. It is a crime for it allows access to benefits for those not lawfully qualified to such public funds. Orissa also has Conversion laws and like it or not all citizens are required to comply with the law of the land. The Church flagrantly disregards the law in this regard. In a Democracy this is inexcusable and undermines the will of the people and the Courts. Not only have the Christian Panas obscured their religious identities as Christians, they have submitted fake certificates identifying themselves as members of the Kandha Tribal community.

Krishna Kumar, the District Magistrate of Kandhamal revealed that his administration is currently investigating numerous cases of fraudulent community certificates. These certifications are meant for the enablement of tribal members. They are used to access government jobs, academic opportunities, loans and other benefits with the government's reservation system. Government jobs are not easy to come by and are far and few between in Kandhamal. Nor are many jobs available in the private sector. Thus the Kandhas are understandably in an uproar over the loss of opportunity. A system that was designed to alleviate their poverty and social stagnation has been hijacked and their woes compounded.

In a memorandum, dated February 12, 2006, from the Commissioner-cum-secretary of Revenue & DM Department, a warning was issued to all Collectors/all Tahalsildars/all Sub-Collectors of the State of Orissa. *"According to Rule-8 (5) if any competent authority is found to have issued a wrong caste certificate, he shall make himself liable for his acts of commission and omission under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code and also under appropriate disciplinary rules applicable to him."*

Within this same memo, the Government recognized that there has been widespread *'misuse of provisions of reservation.'* The government also recognized that, *'the genuine applicants are subjected to harassment.'* These are extremely important observations. They are obvious to anyone investigating the situation in Kandhamal. The media and political leaders of the Congress, Communists and Indian minority lobby have completely ignored this fact. They have pinned the blame for Kandhamal's political troubles solely upon alleged Hindu religious extremists and BJP conspiracies. The basic and harsh reality of the situation seems to have escaped their view. When thousands of people are cheated out of their rights to government entitlements and benefits, there is bound to be an impact. Why are the national media and a majority of the political leadership intentionally ignoring such a reality? And why are those acting in the

defense of the cheated citizenry, such as Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati being discredited and demonized for their acts? The memorandum continues:

*A number of representations have been received citing misuse of provisions of reservation on the basis of wrong caste/community certificates. It is reported that the genuine applicants are subjected to harassment and the caste certificates are not issued within the specified time frame. Instances have come to the notice of government showing issuance of caste certificates in favor of ineligible candidates**. The recent social conflict in a predominantly tribal district are attributable to a great extent to the misuse of protective legislation which include misappropriation of reservation provisions on the basis of caste/community certificates obtained wrongly by the ineligible beneficiaries.** All the competent authorities specified under Rule-6 of the Orissa Caste Certificate (for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Rules 1980 are, therefore, called upon to be extremely careful in issuance of caste certificates. They should take into account the prescribed rules and legal provisions in letter and spirit while issuing the certificates to the deserving persons. It is necessary to reiterate some important rulings of the apex court and the considerations to be taken into account while examining the applications for caste certificates as follows:"*

The memo validates itself by listing several precedent-setting legal cases. This is important as well. Some Indian political activists have a way of discrediting the very foundation of the law merely based on the political party in power. In other words, regardless of the soundness of a law or a ruling, if the governmental authority is of an opposing political persuasion, the media and partisan activists will simply dismiss it. Regardless of such destabilizing antics, the reality remains and the impacts are felt.

Listed below are many identified suspects who have misused the provisions of the reservation system to the detriment of the entire community. They have obtained government jobs reserved for underprivileged members of the tribal community through the use of illegal caste certificates.

Forgery Caste Certificate Holders

Sl. No.	Name of the forgery caste certificate holder as per allegation	Caste He/she belongs to	Forgery certificate hold	Name of service with Office / Deptt. Address	Home Address of the certificate holder
1.	Saroj Kumar Nayak S/o- Gopabandhu	Pano Christian	SC	Asst. Teacher, U.P. School, Parubhata	At-Parubhata , . Po-Khamakhole, Dist-Kandhamal
2.	Sushanta Kumar Bagh S/o-Late Bichitra Bagh	Pano Christian	SC	Asst. Teacher, Kilu U.P. School	-do-
3.	Baikuntha Senapati S/o-Bidyadhar Senapati	-do-	SC	Asst. Teacher, Kateribhata U.P. School, Po-Sudra	-do-
4.	Samsan Senapati S/o-Bidyadhar Senapati	-do-	SC	Head Master, Raipanga P.S. , Po-Khamankhol	-do-
5.	Dhaneswar Nayak S/o- Abhiram Nayak	-do-	SC	Para Teacher at Parubhatta	-do-
6.	Narayan Digal S/o-late Sugni Digal	-do-	SC	Asst. Teacher, Primary school Jargi, Po-Sudra	At-Gatangi Po-Pokhiri Bandha
7.	Madh Sudan Nayak	-do-	SC	Asst. Teacher, Govt. U.P. School , Barakhama	At-Karakhama, PS-Baliguda
8.	Amosh Nayak S/o- Kurunga Nayak	-do-	SC	Asst. Teacher, Jargi UP School	At/Po-Barakhama, Dist-Kandhamal
9.	Ananta Nayak S/o-Esaq Nayak	-do-	SC	Asst. Teacher, Naragan UP School Salaguda G.P.	-do-
10.	Aman Nayak S/o-Misa Nayak	-do-	SC	Asst. Teacher, UG Primary School, Budrukia	-do-
11.	Arabinda Digal S/o- Late Bibhisan Digal	-do-	SC	S.S. Primary School, Sudra G.P.	-do-
12.	Nilanchal Digal S/o- Late Bhaskar Digal	-do-	SC	SS. Primary School, Barakhama	-do-
13.	Bana Bihari Digal S/o- Khageswar Digal	-do-	SC	SS. Primary School, Gadaringia Bataguda G.P.	-do-
14.	Rabindra Nath Digal S/o-Late Kalulu Digal	-do-	SC	Asst. Teacher UP School, Nuasahi , Baliguda	-do-
15.	Subrata Digal S/o-Srikrushna Digal	-do-	SC	Constable C.R.P.F	At/Po-Barakhama Dist-Kandhamal
16.	Regan Nayak S/o-Umesh Nayak	-do-	SC	Constable, District Police, Phulbani	-do-
17.	Laxmi Kanta Digal S/o-Madhusudan Digal	-do-	SC	O.S.A.P., At-Jharsuguda	-do-
18.	Sanjeba Nayak S/o-late Laxman Nayak	-do-	SC	Constablein S.O.G, Orissa Police	-do-
19.	Rekha Digal D/o- MunuNga Digal	-do-	SC	Constable, District Police, Phulbani	-do-
20.	Pratima Nayak D/o- Late Laxmab Nayak	-do-	SC	Forest Guard, DFO, Baliguda	-do-
21.	Jadumani Nayak S/o- Maheswar Digal	-do-	SC	Forest Guard now in Training at Angul	-do-
22.	Jitendra Digal S/o-Lae Kutulu Digal	-do-	SC	Forest Guar at Belghar Forest Deptt.	-do-
23.	Swadhini Nayak W/o- Pabitra, D/o- Rabi Digal	-do-	SC	Live Stock Inspector, SDVO Office, Baliguda	-do-
24.	Sukumari Digal W/o- Mark Digal	-do-	SC	Anganwadi Worker, Sundrumila A.W.C	-do-

Sl. No.	Name of the forgery caste certificate holder as per allegation	Caste He/she belongs to	Forgery certificate hold	Name of service with Office / Deptt. Address	Home Address of the certificate holder
25.	Nirupama Nayak W/o-Arata Nayak	-do-	SC	Anganwadi Worker, Harijan Sahi,Barakhama	-do-
26.	Sujita Digal D/o-Pandita Digal	-do-	SC	Anganwadi Worker,, Melsikia, A.W.C	-do-
27.	Ghana Digal	-do-	SC	Post Master, Gatangi	At-Gatangi, Po-Sudra
28.	Rajendra Digal D/o-Nandada	-do-	SC	Sepay, C.R.P.F	At/Po-Barakhama, PS: Baliguda
29.	Barendra Digal S/o-Katulu	-do-	SC	Lecture in Bhubaneswar	At/Po-Barakhama
30.	Johan Digal S/o-Ramachandra	-do-	SC	S.S.EGS Centre, Gadapinja	At-Salakin, Po-Barakham
31.	Jyotindra Digal	-do-	SC	Post Master, Usrukupa	At-Tikerbaju, Po-Sudra
32.	Mamuna Digal S/o- Debala Digal	-do-	SC	Home Guard Baliguda Police Station	At/Po-Barakhama
33.	Sumani nayak W/o- Khage Bishi	-do-	SC	Peon, PHC Barakhama	At/Po-Barakhama
34.	Kabi Chandra Digal S/o-	-do-	SC	Sikhya Sahayak	At-Teripanga
35.	Urmulla Nayak W/o-Indramani Digal	-do-	SC	Center Binapanga, Baliguda	At-Binapanga
36.	Sunita Digal W/o-Debananda Digal	-do-	SC	Sikshya Sahayak, Keramaha	At-Salaguda
37.	Sunanda Nayak W/o-Sampad Nayak	-do-	SC	Modal Cluster, Junagan	At-Junagan
38	Sala Digal	-do-	SC	Postal Runner, At-Jargi	At-Jargi
39.	Sunita Digal W/o-Tileswar Digal	-do-	SC	Anangawadi Worker At-Sarupada	At/Po-Kurtamgarh
40.	Dillip Mallik S/o-Elio Mallik	-do-	ST	Sikshya Sahayak Tumudibandh	At/Po-Kurtamgarh
41.	Srisanta Kaunhar	-do-	ST	Clerk, Adivasi College, Baliguda	At/Po-Baliguda
42.	Bhagyalata Mallik D/o-Jayananda Mallik	-do-	ST	Sikshya Sahayak, Primary School , Tumudibandh	At/Po-Kurtamgarh
43.	Smt. Jamini Pradhan W/o-Gabriel Pradhan	-do-	ST	Anangawadi Worker, Landurguda	At-Mangapanga Po-Dangesguda
44.	Bishnu Priya Mallik	-do-	ST	A.W.W., Mangapanga Tumudibandh, ICDS	-do-
45.	Kunti Majhi W/o-Braja	-do-	ST	A.W.W., Kurtamgarh	At/Po-Kurtamgarh
46.	Katharina Pradhan W/o-Prasad Lima	-do-	ST	A.W.W., Sapari	-do-
47.	Karanti Mallik W/o-Trilochan Bebarta	-do-	ST	A.W.W., Padikia	-do-
48.	Kunjaban Nayak S/o-Ganeswar Nayak	-do-	SC	SSS, Dupi Primary School	At/Po-Mangapanga Dangesguda
49.	Purachana Digal S/o-Bhuban Mandal	-do-	SC	Teacher, Mangapanga PS	-do-
50.	Biral Singh Nayak S/o-Ramanath Nayak	-do-	SC	-do-	-do-
51.	Birendra Nayak	-do-	SC	Postal Peon, Kurtamgarh	At/Po-Kurtamgarh
52.	Nayani Nayak W/o-Brundaban Digal	-do-	SC	AWW, Murudimaha	At-Murudimaha Po-Dangisguda
53.	Filesitsa Digal W/o-Jayasingh Digal	-do-	SC	AWW, Karakundupa	At/Po-Karakundupa Dangesguda

Sl. No.	Name of the forgery caste certificate holder as per allegation	Caste He/she belongs to	Forgery certificate hold	Name of service with Office / Deptt. Address	Home Address of the certificate holder
54.	Sarala Nayak W/o-Biralsena Nayak	-do-	SC	AWW, Sapeli	At-Mangapanga
55.	Anjana Nayak W/o-Pascel Nayak	-do-	SC	AWW, Indramila	At-Kurtamgarh
56.	Mina Kumari Nayak W/o-Bulu Nanda	-do-	SC	AWW, Jakingia	AT-Kurtamgrh
57.	Snehalata Nayak W/o-Dillip	-do-	SC	Aww, Kurtamgarh	At-Kurtamgarh
58.	Dillip Pradhan S/o-Diga Digal	-do-	ST	Samiti Member Daringibadi	At/Po-Pangalmaha, Kumbharmunda
59.	Suryakanti Singh	-do-	SC	Nuasahi Up School, Baliguda	
60.	Namita Nayak	-do-	SC	SS, Sunapanga	
61.	Sarita Pradhan	-do-	ST	SS, Sambakia	
62.	Banita Nayak	-do-	SC	Nuasahi, Baliguda	
63.	Basanti Majhi	-do-	ST	SS. Urdhu School, Baliguda	
64.	Banabihari Digal	-do-	SC	SS, Gadarangi Up School	
65.	Suresh Kumar Singh	-do-	SC	SS, Kudurikia	
66.	Nilachal Digal	-do-	SC	SS, Barakhma Govt. Up	
67.	Biduyutprabha Nayak	-do-	SC	SS, Damikia Ps	
68.	Namita Mallik	-do-	ST	SS, Gumudumaha Up	
69.	Joshnarani Nayak	-do-	SC	SS, Mundasahi Up	
70.	Usharani Nayak	-do-	SC	SS, Urdhu Ps, Baliguda	
71.	Rajendra Kumar Ranjit	-do-	SC	SS, Bhagamunda, Baliguda	
72.	Boby Nayak	-do-	SC	SS, Bhagamunda, Baliguda.	
73.	Rajkishore Digal	-do-	SC	SS, Kamberikia, Baliguda	
74.	Dipti Jamini Pradhan	-do-	ST	SS, Gadasahi Up	
75.	Sailabala Ranjit	-do-	SC	SS, Patakhanda Sahi Up	
76.	Abani Kumar Nayak	-do-	SC	SS, Bandakia Up	
77.	Salman Pradhan S/o-Tukuda	Hadi Christian	ST	Teacher	At-Satarabadi Po-Daringibadi
78.	Sanatan Pradhan	Pano Christian	ST	EGS, Teacher	-do-
79.	Sapani Pradhan S/o-Durjan Nayak	-do-	ST	-do-	-do-
80.	Simanti Pradhan D/o-Somanath Pradhan	-do-	ST	SS, Teacher	At-Rukanbadi Po-Daringibadi
81.	Sumati Pradhan D/o-Somanath	-do-	ST	-do-	-do-
82.	Braja Kishore Singh	-do-	SC	Teacher	At/Po-Daringibadi
84.	Sanjib Singh	-do-	SC	Teacher	-do-
85.	Rajat Singh	-do-	SC	-do-	-do-
86.	Udayanath Nayak	-do-	SC	OAS, Officer	-do-
87.	Sanjay Kumar Howada	-do-	SC	OAS Officer	At-Tajungia, Po-Mahagudi
					-do-
88.	Izak Behera	-do-	SC	OAS -1	At/Po-Badimunda
89.	Prasanna Nayak	-do-	SC	SBI Clerck	-do-
90.	Prakash Nayak	-do-	SC	-do-	At-Tudukibadi Po-Daringibadi
91.	Janardan Mallik	Hadi Christian	ST		-do-
92.	Benardan Mallik	-do-	ST		At/Po-Chhadakia Daringibadi
93.	Jamuna B. Singh	Pano Christian	SC		

Sl. No.	Name of the forgery caste certificate holder as per allegation	Caste He/she belongs to	Forgery certificate hold	Name of service with Office / Deptt. Address	Home Address of the certificate holder
94.	Nagula Mallik	Hadi Christian	ST		At/Po-Dakedabadi Daringibadi
95.	Galu Chandra Mallik S/o-Keldu Mallik	-do-	-do-		-do-
96.	Sathipati Mallik S/o-Keldu	-do-	-do-		-do-
97.	Sainik Mallik S/o-Nagula	-do-	-do-		-do-
98.	Sarban Mallik S/o-Nanda	-do-	-do-		-do-
99.	Baisidhar Mallik S/o-Nanda	-do-	-do-		-do-
100.	Darasingh Mallik S/o-Nanda	-do-	-do-		-do-
101.	Nala Mallik S/o-Nanda	-do-	-do-		-do-
102.	Sunabar Mallik S/o-Nanda	-do-	-do-		-do-
103.	Nila Mallik S/o-Nanda	-do-	-do-		-do-
104.	Durga Prasad Mallik S/o-Haris	-do-	-do-		-do-
105.	Arun Mallik S/o-Haris	-do-	-do-		-do-
106.	Lalit Kumar Mallik S/o-Prahasad	-do-	-do-		-do-
107.	Ashok Kumar Mallik S/o-Suresh	-do-	-do-		-do-
108.	Ranjit Mallik S/o-Suresh	-do-	-do-		-do-
109.	Saram Mallik S/o-Balaka	-do-	-do-		-do-
110.	Kameswar Mallik	-do-	-do-		-do-
111.	Ishapana Mallik	-do-	-do-		-do-
112.	Alkanchha Mallik	-do-	-do-		-do-
113.	Ujala Pradhan S/o-Dada	-do-	-do-		-do-
114.	Basanta Pradhan S/o-Chandramani	-do-	-do-		-do-
115.	Pitabas Nayak S/o-Dhanu Nayak	Pano Christian	-do-		-do-
116.	Sunit Kumar Nayak	-do-	-do-		At-Greenbadi
117.	Chandramani Padra	-do-	-do-		At-Daketabadi Po-Daringibadi
118.	Rasamali Padra	-do-	-do-		-do-
119.	Bira Pradhan	-do-	-do-		-do-
120.	Utkal Keshari Behera	-do-	-do-	Teacher, Simanbadi ME,	At/Po-Simanbadi
121.	Laxmi Mallik	-do-	-do-	Teacher	At-Greenbadi
122.	Kunal Mallik	-do-	-do-	-do-	At/Po-Tudukibadi
123.	Bhanja Kishore Pradhn	-do-	-do-	-do-	At/Po-Badipadar
124.	Rainga Pradhan	Hadi Christian	-do-	-do-	-do-
125.	Maniraj Mallik	-do-	-do-	-do-	At/Po-Lengadabadi Daringibadi
126.	Kantheswar Mallik S/p-Haribandhu Mallik	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
127.	Gobinda Chandra Pradhan	-do-	-do-	-do-	At-Rajenpala Daringibadi

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128.	Baleswar Pradhan	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
129.	Dusasan Pradhan	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
130.	Bhimasen Pradhan	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
131.	Chitrasen Pradhan	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
132.	Ugrasen Pradhan	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
133.	Sabi Pradhan	-do-	-do-	-do-	At-Dalabadi Daringibadi
134.	Madhu Digal	Pano Christian	SC	-do-	At/Po-Dahatia
135.	Dr. Radhakanta Nayak	-do-	SC	Retired IAS Officer & MP Rajya Sabha	At/Po-Dasingibadi
136.	Sugrib Singh	-do-	SC	M.P., Kandhamal	-do-
137.	Tamili Digal	-do-	SC	SBI Officer	At/Po-Gadingia
138.	Jasobanta Digal	-do-	SC	DIG Cuttack	At/Po-Dadingia
139.	Sekhar Digal	-do-	SC	Union Bank of India Ex. Army	-do-
140.	Dillip Pradhan S/o-Diga Digal	-do-	SC	Kirikuti Samiti Member, Daringibadi Block	At-Pangalmaha Sahi. Kumbharmunda
141.	Dr. Sunil Howada	-do-	-do-	District Medical Officer	At-Kajungia Po-Mahagudi
142.	Subash Howada	-do-	-do-	Clerk, Secretariat, BBSR	-do-
143.	Kamal Kumari Howada	-do-	-do-	Clerk, State Election Commissioner, BBSR	-do-
144.	Amit Chand Nayak	-do-	-do-	OFS, CTO, Jeypore	-do-
145.	Dhyana Chand Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
146.	Nayan Chand Nayak	-do-	-do-	OAS, Tehasildar, Sohela	-do-
147.	Dhiren Chand Nayak	-do-	-do-	OES,	-do-
148.	Dillip Baliarsingh	-do-	ST	Lecturer, Anthropology, Bodangia	Daringibadi
149.	Anantnasi Mallik	-do-	-do-	SS Teacher,	Dasingibadi
150.	Amiya Mallik S/o-Arjun	-do-	-do-	NALCO, Angul	At-Tehedi
151.	Sankirtan Nayak	-do-	SC	Secretariat, BBSR	Jhadangia, Brahmanigaon
152.	Hemanta Baliarsingh	-do-	-do-	Peon , Law Deptt, BBSR	-do-
153.	Iswar Nayak	-do-	-do-	Excise Inspector	-do-
154.	Nanda Kishore Nayak	-do-	SC	Govt. Service	-do-
155.	Fausetin Nayak	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
156.	Simachal Baliarsingh	-do-	-do-	Peon, Health Deptt. Secretariat, BBSR	-do-
157.	Jasabar Baliarsingh	-do-	-do-	Service , PMG, BBSR	-do-
158.	Swayamabar Nayak S/o-Kshaitri	-do-	-do-	Employment Officer, BBSR	At-Kupibadi Po-Daringibadi
159.	Alfans Nayak S/o-Jhadu	-do-	ST	DPO, Rayagada	At/Po-Daringibadi
160.	Dama Nayak S/o-Jhadu	-do-	-do-	Forester, BBSR	-do-
161.	Dibyasingh Nayak S/o-Jhadu	-do-	-do-	Retired Teacher	-do-
162.	Kirspin Nayk S/o-Jhadu	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
163.	Lalita Nayak S/o-Jhadu	-do-	-do-		-do-
164	Subash Chandra Singh S/o-Radan Singh	-do-	SC	OAS, BDO, Malkangiri	At/Po-Darisingibadi
165.	Bhaskar Singh S/o-Ramakrushna	-do-	-do-	Sevak, Chhadakia SS	-do-

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166.	Dibakar Singh S/o-Ramakrushna	-do-	-do-	DSP, Berhampur SP	-do-
167.	Dr. Sukriya Nayak S/o-Sarasthi	-do-	-do-	Doctor	-do-
168.	Abhimanyu Nayak	-do-	-do-		At/Po-Kerubadi Via-Daringibadi
169.	Kishore Kumar Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
170.	Ashok Kumar Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
171.	Saroj Kumar Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
172.	Rajat Kumar Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
173.	Sikandar Nayak S/o-Baman Singh	-do-	-do-		At/Po-Dasingibadi
174.	Udayanath Nayak S/o-Narsingh	-do-	-do-		-do-
175.	Biswanath Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
176.	Laxmi Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
177.	Santosh Kumar Nayak S/o-Judistir Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
178.	Kishore Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
179.	Sisil Kumar Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
180.	Ramakanta Nayak	-do-	-do-	Clerk, LIC Office, BBSR	Mahagudi Brahamigaon
181.	Rajanikanta Nayak	-do-	-do-	Teacher	-do-
182.	Agadhu Nayak	-do-	-do-	Excise Deptt.	At/Po-Terubadi Daringibadi
183.	Sanjay Kumar Nayak	-do-	-do-	Head Sevak, DWO, Phulbani	At-Tatamaha, Po-Mandakia, Via-Raikia
184.	Johan Nayak	-do-	-do-	Retired IPS	At/Po-Luhuringia PS-Raikia
185.	Prasanna Nayak	-do-	-do-	SBI Clerk	At-Badimunda,Via-Tikabali
186.	Prakash Nayak	-do-	-do-		-do-
187.	Kamal Digal	-do-	-do-	SBI Officer	At-Gadingia, Po-Maniksaru
188.	Jasobanta Digal	-do-	-do-	DIG Police , Cuttack	At-Dadingia, Po/Via-Raikia
189.	Sekhar Digal	-do-	-do-	Ex. Army, Union Bank of India	-do-
190.	Yubaraj Pradhan D/o-Banamali Digal	-do-	ST	Peon, Forest Deptt. G.Udayagiri	At/Po-Talarimaha PS-Tikabali
191.	Nakula Pradhan S/o-Jila Digal	-do-	-do-	Army	At-Saka, Po-Talarimaha, PS-Tikabali
192.	Dharmaraj Pradhan	-do-	-do-	Horticulture Deptt. Boudh	At/Po-Talarimaha, PS-Tikabali

The evidence confirms the long term pattern of illegality at work in Kandhamal. This exposes the authentic source of tribal anger. Allegations against the RSS, VHP as the instigators of the Kandhamal tension therefore lack credibility. One of the methods by which the Christian Pana have been able to get false Tribal Certificates is revealed by the Sub-collector of Kandhamal currently investigating the many cases of land fraud in the district.

Orissa Government officials report that the 52% Kandhas own less than 10% of the land in the district of Kandhamal. The exact data is not available. Indian law prohibits the sale of tribal land

to a non-tribal. Yet in one of the most tribal dominated regions of the country, the tribes barely control any of their own land. According to Sub-collector Pradipta land records have been skewed. This is due to the outright cheating and scheming that has taken place.

Pradipta, the government official investigating land record fraud, explains a process by which the Christian Panas gain control of tribal lands and also gain official recognition as a tribal, *"A Pana convinces a Kandha tribal to sell the land. Both come to the land Registrar's office to record the sale and get a copy of the land sale deed." In order to circumvent the total ban on the sale of tribal lands to non-tribals fraudulent means are employed. "The Pana then enters his caste as 'Kondh' (Kandha) on the document. Since the Registrar's job is only to collect the stamp duty for the sale, he has no reason to doubt or investigate such a claim."*

Krishna Kumar, the collector of Kandhamal reveals, "Once the sale deed is completed the Pano (Pana) owns the land in the State and the State land records reflect his caste identity as a Kondh (Kandha). Then the Pana goes to the Tehsildar and says, 'I am a Kandha. Look I own land here and the sale deed has noted me as a Kandha.' The Tehsildar thus gives the Pano (Pana) a Tribal certificate and the Scheduled Caste Pana becomes legally identified as a Scheduled Tribe Kandha." [xxv]

Thus through sly and criminally manipulative methods the Christian Panas have developed a process by which the Kandhas have been stripped of their lands, their legally entitled Government jobs and even their very tribal identity. Thus the Christian Panas are keeping their cake and eating it too. As S.C. (Scheduled Caste) they are entitled to benefits as long as they stay within the Hindu fold. As explained earlier, Christians allegedly have no caste. Thus once a Pana converts to Christianity and prevails upon the foreign largesse provided by the Church, his social status rises to a level above and beyond that of his Kandha neighbors. The Kandhas see this and resent it. Thereupon when the Christian Panas began their drive to usurp the very identities of the Kandhas through land fraud, illegal tribal certification and finally by manipulation of the Indian Constitution and legal system, the Kandhas responded. *"They took our land first. Then they took things from the Christian Missionaries. Now they want to become tribals and want to take away our jobs as well?"* exclaimed Chief Lambodhar Kanhar of the Kandhamal Kandhas.

Adding yet another layer of turmoil to the situation, the Christian Panas began a movement demanding official recognition as a scheduled tribe. As early as 1981, the Christian Panas began maneuvering to be identified as a tribe. Intense political pressure upon the government and the courts led to direct conflict with the Kandhas. The

[xxv] **Livemint** '*In Kandhamal, kings see power shift to landless*' October 23, 2008

Christian Panas not only demanded tribal status, they demanded to be identified as members of the Kui tribe. Kui is the native language of the Kandhas. Obviously the Kandhas were disturbed by this demand. They saw this as yet another attack upon their identity and rights. Kandha counter movements were developed in a direct response to the Christian Pana demands.

To Kui or Not to Kui

"Strongly opposing Tribes Advisory Council for combining the term 'Kandha' with 'Kui' in the tribal list in Orissa aimed at recognizing the tribal group and preventing non-tribals from availing Scheduled Tribe (ST) certificates, Kandhamal District Kui Samaj Coordination Committee leader Lambodar Kanhar said that there is no need to add 'Kandha' with 'Kui' both the terms are synonymous. "The term Kui means Kandha, a primitive tribe in Orissa. There is no need to add Kandha with Kui to recognize the tribals," he said. In the face of allegation of circulation of fake tribal certificates, Orissa government had suggested the council to delete 'Kui' from the list of tribes. It was alleged that several Kui speaking non-tribals, especially Panos in Kandhamal had obtained ST certificates and were getting the benefits meant for tribals."A person speaking Kui language doesn't mean that he or she belongs to that tribe," Kanhar said. The move would create another row in the district, Kanhar said, adding Kui speaking 'Panos' might demand their recognition as 'Kui Panos' to avail benefits meant for tribals."[XXVI]

Kui is the native language of the Kandha tribes of Kandhamal. Despite exposure to other languages, the Kandhas maintained their unique language of Kui and use it to communicate with each other and the outside world. The Pana migrants familiarized themselves with this language and used it effectively in their interactions as middlemen between the Kandha and the outside world. The fact that the Pana were familiar enough with Oriya is indicative of their migrant roots. This is a stark comparison with the Kandhas who rarely spoke anything but Kui. The Panas, being a minority group within a Kui speaking majority were dependent upon the use of Kui. It was required of them in order to function in their capacity as a bridge between the Kandhas and the outside world. The symbiotic relationship they had with the Kandhas demanded that they become fluent in the language. Generations later, the Kui language has become the language of the Kandhamal Panas. Thus today the Kui language is the official language of both the Kandhas and Panas.

In 1997 a major political effort was initiated by the Christian Panas and their supporters to create a language based identity. Kui, being a tribal language, was used as the basis

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[XXVI] **Indopia** 'Kandhamal tribals oppose addition of term 'kandha' with 'kui' January 10, 2009

for a formulation that identified all Kui speakers as tribals. In this way, a demand was made upon the Orissa State government to recognize all Pana Kui speakers as '*The Kui People*.'

In the President of India's Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act 2002 the name Kui was added. It was an official Act of Parliament (No. 10 of 2003) which received the assent of the President of India on January 7th 2003. It was issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice's legislative department on January 8, 2003 under k, PART XII Orissa- Section xiii: "in entry 31, at the end, insert *"Kondh, Kui, Buda Kondh, Bura Kandha, Desia Kandha, Dungaria Kandha, Kutia Kandha, Kandha Gauda, Muli Kondh, Malua Kondh, Pengo Kandha, Raja Kondh, and Raj Kandha".*

Following the Congress Party's Janaki Ballabh Pattnaik's Government's recommendation to India's Central government that Christian Pana demands be recognized, the Panas became optimistic of achieving their goals. The tribals, however, were agitated by the Christian efforts. Skirmishes and violent clashes took place repeatedly.

Something to note is that it was this same Congress led Orissa State Government of Chief Minister J.B. Patnaik that was mired in the Anjana Mishra rape controversy. This led to Sonia Gandhi's removal of J.B.Patnaik as CM.[XXVII] and his replacement with Giridhar Gamang.

The bid to reformulate the official Pana identity began as early as 1981. At the time Radha Kanta Nayak, as an IAS officer, was the Secretary of a State Government department. It was during his tenure that the recommendation of the Pana to be recognized as tribals was submitted to the Central Government. There was a definite conspiracy at work. R.K. Nayak, who is currently a Rajya Sabha (India's House of Lord's) member, has been named by many political observers as the primary mover behind this act.

The Presidential order, accepting the former Congress Government's recommendation in 2003, increased the Christian Pana's confidence. They became increasingly strident and militant in their demands. The Kandhas became even more insecure. However the election of the BJD-BJP State Government gave the Kandhas a reprieve. Refusing to implement the order, the Orissa State Government hoped to alleviate the rising wrath of the tribes. The Christian Panas responded by challenging the Government in the Courts. The Supreme Court was moved to direct the State Government to implement the Presidential order. However the Court observed that it was up to the State to act in this regard.

[XXVII] **Frontline:A changeover in Orissa** Vol. 16 :: No. 05 :: Feb. 27 - Mar. 12, 1999 and **Times of India** 'System insensitive, says rape victim' 18 Aug 2006

In December 2005 the Pana front group, the Phulbani Kuee Janakalyan Sangha submitted a letter to the State Government of Orissa requesting to have the name of their Caste changed from Pana to Kui.

In a reply dated June 21, 2006 the Orissa State Government replied, *"…your claim to change the caste name from Pana to Kui appears to have no merit, as it is not based on historical and anthropological facts. This is for your kind information."* Signed by Sri K.P. Dash, Deputy Secretary to Government[XXVIII]

The Christian Panas continued their efforts by submitting a letter on January 5, 2007, to the Government of Orissa's S.T. & S.C. Department once again requesting their caste name be changed from Pana to Kui. Applying the anthropological and historical facts to the case, the State ruled that the Panas had no authentic claim to be recognized as a tribe.

Shri Gopinath Sethi, OAS-I (SB) Deputy Secretary to the Government S.T. & S.C. Department replied in a letter with the subject "Correction of Land Revenue Records," dated January 16, 2007, *"Sir, I am directed to invite reference to your letter No. 17/PKJS/BBSR dt.5.1.07 on the subject cited above and to say that your claim to change the caste name from Pana to Kui appears to have not merit as it is not based on historical and anthropological facts. Hence further correspondence in this regard may not be made."* [XXIX]

According a statement by the Orissa High Court entitled Misc. Case 10349/2007, a conspiracy and outright manipulation and misrepresentation of the legal system by the Christian Pana advocacy group did take place.

"In the present misc. case, it has been mentioned that the petitioner of the writ petition, after coming to know regarding the aforesaid order passed by this court and after getting intimation that the letter issued by Sri Padmanabha Behera, Hon'ble Minister,, Steel & Mines has been utilized by the present opposite party no. 1 for altering the Group of Kui Community from Scheduled Caste to Scheduled Tribe, met the Hon'ble Minister as to how the persons from Kui Community were accepted as persons from S.T. Community by him and the orders have been obtained on that basis by way of concealment of facts".

"While passing order on 12.7.2007, we had considered the merit of the case one way or the other. However, a letter of Sri Padmanabha Behera, Hon'ble Minister, Steel & Mines has been annexed with the writ petition as annexure-8 with the heading "TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN". However the letter does not show that the Hon'ble Minister has certified "Kuee" Community people of Kandhamal people of Kandhamal district as Scheduled Tribes and this Court had also not taken into consideration the said letter and only left the matter open for the opposite parties

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[XXVIII] **State Government of Orissa, Revenue & Disaster Management Department** No.23087 Dated 21.06.06

[XXIX] **Government of Orissa, S.T. & S.C. Department** No.PCR(C)22/05 1125/SSD Dated 16.1.07

to look into it. Therefore, if the opposite parties, especially the Tahasildar, G. Udaygiri, district Kandhamal, considers the matter and finds that "Kui" Community to which the petitioner of the writ petition relates is so categorized as S.C. (Pana) and not S.T. (Scheduled Tribe.) he may reject the application for correction of R.O.R. (Record of Rights) as we had never directed the Tahasildar (revenue administrative officer in Pakistan and India.) or any opposite party to make correction in the R.O.R. showing the petitioner or his Community as S.T. Therefore, in view of the above, there is no need to recall the order dated 12.7.2007. Misc Case is accordingly disposed of. Urgent certified copy of the order be granted as per rules." [xxx]

This indicates a clear attempt on the part of the Christian Pana leadership and their supporters to circumvent the rule of the law. These unlawful attempts were made after July 2007 and the court order came September 20th, 2007. Violence erupted between the Christian Panas and the Kandhas in December 2007. The Christian Panas' manipulative effort to be identified as the Kui people was a direct cause of the December clash.

This recent move by the Christian Pana community represents only one tactic in pursuit of their agenda. The Christian Pana attempted to monopolize tribal benefits in a series of blatantly hostile acts.

According to the informed opinions of the experts at the Scheduled Tribe & Scheduled Caste department, the Presidential order 2002 that lists 'Kui' as Scheduled Tribe is accurate. The problem is that it is being misread and misinterpreted by unscrupulous vested interests. In a notice issued to all Collectors dated September 18, 2007 with the Subject heading, *"Clarification regarding inclusion of Kui in the list of Scheduled Tribes for Orissa in Presidential order as per the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act 2002 and correction of Record of Rights*".

"It is not out of place to mention that before the amendment under reference, the Presidential order specified "Kandha, Kond, Kandha, Manguli Kandha, Sitha Kandha" vide entry No. 31 as Scheduled Tribe for the State of Orissa. From the Presidential orders, it is clear that the communities mentioned in the entry 31 are Kandha, Kond, Kandha, Manguli Kandha, Sitha Kandha tribes with all their synonyms which include 'Kui'. No scope remains to read Pana, which is a Scheduled Caste in the Presidential order vide entry No. 69 into entry 31 as Scheduled Tribe as it is. It is a well known fact that the Kandha/Kond/Kandha tribe in Orissa speaks Kui language. There are other communities/castes including Pana/Pano who live in their neighborhood and speak the same language/dialect. It will not be permissible to include or specify all the Kui language speakers as Scheduled Tribe. Orders passed by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the case of Nityananda Sharma & another vs. State of Bihar 1996 regarding inclusion and exclusion of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes in the Presidential order are relevant" "…It is clarified that the correction of Record of Rights should not imply dilution or

[xxx] **Orissa High Court-98** Serial No. of Order-3, Date of Order 20.09.2007 W.P.C. No. 7068 of 2007 Misc. Case 10349/2007

circumvention of the Presidential order. "Pan, Pana, Buna Pana, Desua Pana" which have been specified as Scheduled Caste in the Presidential order vide entry Number 69 cannot be shown as 'Kui', a Scheduled Tribe by correcting the Record of Rights as it is."

In other words, the S.T. & S.C. Development Department is saying that entry 31 is Kandha specific. The inclusion of Kui bracketed on all sides by the names of the various Kandha tribes proves that Kui refers to the Kandhas alone. The Panas, the Dept correctly points out, have already been listed in Presidential order in entry 69 as a Scheduled Caste. Thus the attempt to impose the Pana identity into an order related to tribes has no legitimate basis. The Panas have been categorized and their identity confirmed within the fundamental framework of the constitution and the law of the land. The Presidential order of 2002 entry 31 regarding the tribes deals exclusively with the many branches of the Kandha tribes and sub-tribes. There is no scope for non-Kandha groups to be inferred. As indigenous Kui speakers, Kui thus refers to the various Kandha groups. Over many generations, the Panas adopted the Kui language through close interaction with the Kandhas. The S.T. & S.C. Dept advisory concludes with a clear and judicious and obvious resolution.

"In view and in obedience to the order of Hon'ble High Court, the claims of an individual to be noted in the Record of Rights as a "Kui tribe' may be considered for correction of Record of Rights only if such claims are supported by the authentic documents, field verification reports and proof to the satisfaction of competent authority that their caste has been wrongly indicated in Record of Rights as 'Pano'(Pana) though in fact their caste is Kandha/Kond/Kandha/Kui etc tribe/sub tribe as specified in entry 31 of the presidential order 2002."

Another significant aspect of this issue is the fact that the word 'Kui' is used, not in terms of a language but in reference to a tribe. It does not say 'Kui speakers'. Thus the attempts to use language rather than the obvious socio-cultural markers to identify the 'Kui' community are a deliberate manipulation of the Indian constitution.

The authorities had given the Christian Panas and their supporters a clear and blunt message. This represented a turning point in the history of Kandhamal. Failing to achieve their goals by use of the legal system, the Christian Panas turned to other methods. The government's refusal to grant the Panas tribal status was not a case of biased politics. The records and the facts prove that the Panas are not and have never been a tribe in accordance to the guidelines set by the Indian Constitution. Nor do they have the anthropological markers that modern scientists apply when identifying a tribal culture. Some of the clearly definable markers that are used to identify a tribe are clarified by a recent assessment done by the Government of Orissa's Community Tank Development & Management Society, Department of Water Resources.

"The term 'Scheduled Tribes' first appeared in the Constitution of India. Article 366 (25) defined scheduled tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such

tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution". The criterion followed for specification of a community, as scheduled tribes are indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness."[XXXI]

The entire structure of the Pana-Kandha relationship was built and is based upon the Pana ability to maintain fluid and constant interactions with the '*Community at large*'. Such frequent interaction has always been a primary identifying feature of the Pana culture. From the pre-recorded histories of Kandha legend down through British times up to the modern era, the Panas have always maintained a constant interaction with the outside world. Therefore they lack a primary requisite feature required of an authentic tribal community.

In September-October 2008 I conducted extensive interviews with the world's leading anthropologists, historians and other experts on India's tribes during a month long fact-finding mission to Orissa. I was able to access their life long and hand's on experiences, studies and research on the languages, cultures, traditions and histories on the tribes of Orissa. These experts did not agree on everything. However they all verified the Government's stance on the Pana. According to these experts, the Pana are not and have never been identified as a tribal group. The groups demanding scheduled tribe status for the Panas have absolutely no documentation nor authentic evidence to back up their claims. It is based purely upon political and economic considerations.

To put the situation into perspective, let us visualize a hypothetical scenario based on the European migrations to the Americas. In this hypothesis the Native American population is numerous in a manner similar to that of India's population. The Europeans manage to establish small colonies amongst them as a new migrant migratory group. In this scenario the American natives are technologically capable enough to resist outright domination by the European minority. Eventually the European migrants adapt by adopting the language, customs and mannerisms of the more numerous majority. In fact minus their guns the Europeans would have had no choice but to acclimate themselves to the predominating culture or perish. The native language and culture becomes an integral part of their day to day functioning and lifestyle.

Some scholars suggest that this scenario played itself out at the time of the pre-Columbian Viking settlements in North America. These Vikings led by Leif Erickson represent the first known European migrants to the Americas. They were no match with the American natives. Having arrived in an era prior to the European development of gunpowder based weapons, the Viking colonies soon perished.

[XXXI] **Orissa Community Tank Development & Management Society,** Department of Water Resources, Social Assessment, Government of Orissa Dated the 7th of December 2007

However in our scenario, the European migrants survive and thrive by integrating themselves into the Native culture. At the same time, these migrants maintain links to the outside world and become the middlemen in all interactions between their native hosts and the world beyond the native sphere of influence. Soon a new and unique culture develops. It is a blend of the old European roots and their newly adopted ways and languages.

Again this phenomenon was seen repeatedly in the early phases of the European exploration and colonization of the Americas. The clothing, language and customs of the native hosts became a functioning part of the explorer, furrier and colonist. The French, in particular, integrated themselves into the tribal communities around them. The famous Lewis and Clark expedition succeeded only through a process of mimesis. By functioning as natives and with the help of the natives, particularly the young girl Sacajawea, the American explorers not only survived but were able to claim the entire West for their new Nation. In nearly every instance the Europeans, were initially helpless yet by adapting to their new surroundings and culture they were able to establish themselves. Through agreements, treaties and alliances the migrant groups were able to prosper.

Yet once the Europeans became more numerous, they broke the treaties, agreements and alliances that had so recently supported them. A case in point is the first British American colony of Jamestown. Only through the direct assistance of the American Indians did they survive. If the natives had not assisted them and had the colonists not adopted the Native ways Jamestown would have collapsed. The people would not have survived the first winter. Only the by the support of the Indians were the colonists saved from starvation. The same goes for the early Massachusetts colonies. To this day the Americans celebrate Thanksgiving Day as a National holiday. Yet many modern descendants of the American Natives refer to it as No Thanks-Giving day and with good reason. Soon after surviving the first winter through the goodwill of the natives, the British turned upon their hosts. Superior technology allowed for the European colonists to decimate the tribes and soon the Native Americans were forced to give way.

Going back to our hypothetical scenario, the Europeans do not have a technological edge over the natives. They maintain their working relationship with their host group. They become indispensable to the economy in their role as middlemen. They take advantage of their position as a bridge between the native group and all outsiders. They begin to manipulate the inexperience and naivety of the natives and ensnare them into various traps leading to indebtedness. Over generations the bonds both positive and negative become fundamental to the day to day functioning of the region. By this time our European minority is fluent in the native tongue.

Through a process called Nativization and by a sheer necessity the old languages are no longer the primary language of the Europeans. They wear native clothes, feathers, dance at the Pow Wows (Native dances) and are familiar with the religion, culture and traditions of the natives. They even provide victims for their rituals and make a profit from almost every aspect of their relationship. Generations go by and the European minority recognizes a vast difference between themselves and the Europeans of Europe. They see Natives they have grown up with and integrated with as more familiar for the simple reason that they are indeed more familiar.

Despite a common racial heritage with other Europeans, their cultural identity is closer to the native tribes around them. Then suddenly, due to the impact of external forces, they see a benefit of being identified as a native tribe. Opportunity for an improved condition encourages them to begin demanding such recognition. History is made of such scenarios. Rationales are developed and campaigns pursued.

The fact is, regardless of their perspective or demands, these hypothetical European migrants cannot change their identity or history. They can never rightfully claim a tribal identity ignoring all the anthropological realities involved. Culturally they may feel native and identify as a tribe but to demand such recognition at the expense of the tribals themselves is improper. A group that has all the anthropological markers of being a tribe should not be denied its rights at the expense of a non-tribal group. It is erroneous to demand recognition from a government agency that has been solely designed for the upliftment of tribes. This is even more injurious specifically when a system is in place to assist the non-tribal group in their own needs. It may be an inconvenient reality, but attempting to artificially impose demands that cannot be justified within the framework of the law is not equitable. This is exactly what is happening between the Christian Panas and Kandhas in Kandhamal.

Verifying the conscious transformation of the Panas into a quasi-tribal society, Jagannath Pathy writes in his '*Ethnic Minorities in the Process of Development*,' *"Accordingly Pana, Dom, Gond and others tried to emulate the culture, dress, pattern, behaviors and rituals of the tribal minorities."*[XXXII] However, such emulation does not make one a member of a ST Scheduled Tribe.

A key feature of the Christian Pana's claim is that they have always been outside the purview of the Hindu caste system. Yet this theory is not plausible.

The Orissa District Gazetteer's Department of Revenue 1967 states, "*The Panas are mainly divided into two classes, namely the Jena Pana and the Pana Tunti. The former is an unclean caste, while the latter have become clean Sudras.*[XXXIII] Clearly if the Panas can be

[XXXII] **Ethnic Minorities in the Process of Development** Jagannath Pathy 1988
[XXXIII] **Orissa District Gazetteer** pg 114 Department of Revenue 1967

recognized as Sudras within Hindu society's strict caste system there must be a historical basis for such recognition. Yet the Christian Panas of Kandhamal, pressured by the Church leadership are now attempting to change historical and anthropological realities to suit their advantage. They deny that they are members of the scheduled caste group.

Significantly, Pana referred to a member of the lower castes in the ancient Indian Prakrit language. *"Pana is a low caste in Prakrit."*[xxxiv] This is direct anthropological and linguistic reference to the Pana's ancient place within the ancient Indian social system.

We also have the evidence from the report, *"Tribal situation in India: Indian institute of Advanced Study"* Published by Indian Institute of Advanced Study in 1969. *"Tribals are not considered 'Untouchables' anywhere in Orissa. The Kandhas are rather regarded as a high group."*[xxxv] The Panas however have been identified as Harijans based upon the stigma of being 'Untouchables.' Before Gandhi's uplifting application of the term Harijan for India's Untouchables, the Pana were called as Untouchable Outcastes. As far back as the 7th Century A.D. we find evidence that the Panas of South India were considered as Untouchables.

"Cambantar (seventh century A.D.), one of the three great Tevaram hymnists took along with him a Pana by the name Tiruneelakanta Yal Panar so that he could play on his yal (a kind of lyre) whenever a song was sung by Cambantar. Panas seem to have been considered untouchables during this period. Therefore when he took his disciple into the house of an orthodox devotee called Tirunilanakkar there was some hesitation."[xxxvi]

We find, however, that Orissa's tribals were never considered as Untouchables. Regardless, the Pana, despite having been recognized as untouchables in Orissan society, are claiming that they are tribals. Obviously these claims go completely against the anthropological and historical realities of Orissa. Therefore the Pana identification as a Scheduled Caste (SC) group is correct. Information regarding the identity of the Panas will be detailed in another chapter. Ill advised by certain vested interests they are attempting to empower themselves at the expense of an entire community of their fellow citizens. Such an reckless approach to the issues creates chaos. It threatens to collapse of the administration of benefits and makes a mockery of the entire Constitutional system.

By manipulation of the system the Christian Panas are attempting to get that which is not their due. This does not deny that they have legitimate grievances, concerns and

[xxxiv] **Proceedings - Indian History Congress** 1978

[xxxv] **The Tribal Situation in India** pg 527 Kumar Suresh Singh, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Indian institute of advanced study Published by Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1969

[xxxvi] **The Indian Historical Review** Indian Council of Historical Research, pg 54, 1996

aspirations. It is that they are using the wrong method and approach to improve their lot. None can doubt that the Panas deserve to be treated with equality, dignity and justice. Rather than artificially imposing their identity upon a mechanism developed for the tribals, the Christian Panas would be better advised to seek an alternate approach. Their current tactics are predatory in nature. They cause resentment and are the primary cause for frequent and violent social upheavals. This is an undeniable reality. The Christian Panas have usurped key government posts, jobs and academic opportunities reserved for the Kandha tribals. There are countless examples of this throughout the recent history of Kandhamal.

According to a report from the Indo-Asian News Service (IANS):

Bhubaneswar, Orissa: April 10 - *The police have booked at least 32 people on the charges of manipulating caste certificates and enjoying government benefits in Kandhamal district of Orissa, an official said Thursday." "….The tribals, mostly Hindus, alleged that non-tribal people from a community known as Pana are occupying important government posts in the district and enjoying government benefits by submitting false caste certificates. 'We have registered criminal cases against at least 32 people after we found that they had obtained false caste certificates,' a senior official told IANS. 'We received 122 such allegations from tribals. After inquiry, we have also recommended departmental actions against at least 53 government officials for securing government jobs by submitting false caste certificate,' he said, refusing to be named. The tribals were angry after they found that some non-tribal people were enjoying government benefits by submitting false caste certificates, he said.*[xxxvii]

'The Hindu' featured an article with the headline, *'Demand for quota caused tension'*. Quoting Additional Advocate-General of Rajasthan Sardar G. S. Gill the article wrote, *"…demanding Scheduled Tribe status on the basis of speaking Kui language was an important factor behind the long hatred prevailing between tribals and Pana community who were 'converted' to Christianity…the matter should also be inquired into from the angle of encroachments and possession on the land of tribal people by non-tribal people."*[xxxviii]

It is important to note that such direct revelations regarding the crisis have been few and far between since the murder of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati.

The Christians' intensification of their demands for Scheduled Tribe status appears to be directly linked with the hundreds of false certificates currently being investigated. Through these certificates, Christian Panas have gained employment and other benefits reserved for the Kandhas. As they are exposed, they lose their jobs and benefits. By gaining scheduled tribe status the Christian Pana can thus maintain their illegitimate positions within the government. A brief investigation of the political situation reveals a

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xxxvii **Nerve** April 10, 2008 www.nerve.in/news:253500140388

xxxviii **The Hindu** 'Demand for quota caused tension' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa February 8, 2008

pattern of layered manipulations and schemes at work. As soon as one layer is peeled back another illegitimate response develops adding to the sense of crisis. As the majority Kandhas attempt to find justice the minority Christian Panas endeavor to rewrite the very laws at the heart of the justice system. It is at this point that the administration and the legal system can no longer guarantee the security of the people. It is at this point that people begin to take the law into their own hands.

Loss of Land Loss of Identity

Beyond the more recent issues of identity and language, land alienation has long been a major concern for the tribal people of Kandhamal. In a memorandum submitted to the Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil, the Congress Party and its political allies, the Communist CPI and CPM parties, identified land disputes as the root cause of the violence in Kandhamal. Recognizing land alienation as the basis of the trouble, they demanded that a special task force of the Revenue Department be constituted to resolve the matter.[xxxix]

Mysteriously these same Congress and Communist politicians continue to openly blame the BJP, RSS, VHP and other Hindu activists as the root cause of Kandhamal's woes. Unfortunately they, along with the media, have decided to use the issue as a weapon against their political enemies. Despite such manipulations, the fact remains that land alienation is without a doubt, at the foundation of the turmoil.

Dr Krishna Kumar, Kandhamal District Magistrate stated, *"The tribals have been around forever. They are the original dwellers here. They never had to prove that they owned the land. I mean why would they? In the early 1990s the Tribal lands opened up. Pattas, a certificate indicating ownership of land began to be given out. The tribes have a complex social structure. Within themselves they had given land to neighbors for various reasons. When they had to prove ownership of the land, they could not. Others came in and the tribals couldn't integrate with the market economy."*

Beyond a mere inability to integrate, the Kandhas were blatantly disinherited from their lands for generations. This fact is intimately connected to the Kandha-Pana dynamic. Over the decades they had developed a symbiotic relationship with the Panas. As the owners of the land, the Kandhas allowed various outsiders to work their land, build on their land and use their land in exchange for goods and services. An agreement would be reached between the two parties. Both the Kandhas and the Panas lived happily as long as they kept within the framework of their agreement. This framework has since been shattered once a majority of Pana converted to Christianity.

[xxxix] **Express News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa January 2, 2008

Additionally, after the death of the original parties to the agreement, resentments developed. Often the sons of the Pana land workers would attempt to claim the land. Their reasoning was based on the fact that the land had been worked by the family for generations. Other Kandhas who had allowed merchants to use their lands for shops and depots would incur large debts. At times, not understanding the subtleties of commerce, the Kandhas would find themselves outmaneuvered. In many cases liquor was involved. By entering into agreements with the Pana business class the Kandha elders frequently lost control of their own lives and thus lost control of their own lands. A symbiotic relationship soon transformed into a parasitic one.

A case in point is the case of Mera Mallick, Saku Mallick, Puresar Mallick and Ganja Mallick of Rebingia village. They revealed that as far as they are concerned the Christian Panas are predators and thieves. The Pana Christians have stolen more than 20 acres of their land. Despite repeated requests to various agencies they have so far not been able to reclaim their land. The Mallick family is just one case highlighting the Christian Pana's predatory tactics and the resulting endemic land alienation at the root of the turmoil.

According to Dr. A.C. Sahu, Government of Orissa St & SC Development Department, Director of the Rural Development Dept. Directorate of Academy of Tribal Dialect & Culture, the Kandhas were blatantly disinherited from their lands. After more than 30 years studying, living and working with and for the tribals of Orissa and other parts of India, A.C. Sahu developed a deep understanding of their condition. Employed by the Indian Government's Tribal Development Department his insights are quite educational and informative. He observed, *"Some Kandhas lost their lands to the Panas by incurring vast debts based on their drinking habits. Having no money yet wanting wine they would give up their land claims. Other times elder family members would share tales of past land grabs and broken agreements. Younger Kandhas would grow up hearing how this or that Pana cheated the Kandhas. In recent times, tribal lands have been sold to major Industrial houses but not by the tribals but by non-tribals. Thus the violence in Kandhamal is really based on socio-political factors and land disputes…Land is absolutely vital to the tribal identity. As an example Wataka is a tribal region and the tribes of that region bear the surname of Wataka. Thus their very identity is tied to their land. Their lands are also their Church and for generations they have worshipped and sacrificed on this land. Thus the very core of their identity is intimately tied to the land, religion and traditions. Their very sense of self is tied up with the land. Thus loss of land strips the tribes of their identity."* [XL] An upcoming report by Director A.C. Sahu will illuminate upon these very issues. It will be of immense value to understanding the problems confronted by the tribal communities of India.

[XL] **Author's Interview with A.C. Sahu** at the Orissa Tribal Museum, Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa Sept 19,2008

P.C. Dogra I.P.S Indian Police Service (Retd) President, Forum on Integrated National Security highlighted the situation. *"In Barakhoma, 13 cases for land restoration were filed in the court of OSD/ land reforms (Balliguda). They were decided in the year 2001 in favour of the tribals with a clear direction to the Tehsildar to deliver the possession after the appeal period is over. But restoration has not yet been effected by the local administration and the police. To date, 22 acres in Barakhoma, 7 acres in Kelapada, 5 acres in Gresinga under Udaygiri Block, besides at many other places are allegedly under illegal occupation of the Church and the Christians which actually belong to the tribes."*[XLI]

The meaning and significance of land within the Kandha Culture cannot be underestimated. It is integral to their sense of self, their religion and it is no exaggeration to say that it is at the very core of the Kandha identity. Pranab Mangaraj, Ph.D of Berhampur University wrote of this in his book *Rural Development and Political Participation among Tribals*. *"To the Kandhas, earth is not something to be used, not a possession nor an object of exploitation, but a living entity and an object of worship. It is sacred and intimate. The rituals of the terra matter refer man back to his primeval association with the earth and the symbolic assumption of organic link with the mother Earth. There is a myth in the Kandha society that the Earth deity was the first Kandha woman who came out of the earth and at her own request became the first human sacrifice. This act of hers imposed an obligation on the Kandhas to make regular offerings of blood to propitiate her. In exchange, she would grant fertility and wellbeing. The earth, thus, became the spiritual ancestor through whom lineal descent, as the belief goes, could be traced. All of them are born of her, "in the same way', to quote Mircea Eliade, "The Earth with her inexhaustible fecundity gives birth to the rocks, rivers, trees and flowers'. Cultivating earth was fraught with guilt and fear. It was seen to be an act of pollution or defilement. Rites are performed and a merriah is sacrificed to propitiate her. Fertility of land depended on whether the deity had been appeased. Draught and famine were attributed to neglect in making the necessary offerings to the deity."*[XLII] This blood sacrifice ritual was a vital aspect of the Earth worshipping members of the Kandha tribes. Not all Kandha religion consisted of blood sacrificial based ritual elements. Nonetheless the Earth Goddess was and is a prominent deity for all Kandha people.

Dr Mangaraj reveals the most important and crucial nature of the Kandha-land relationship, *"Land is most precious to the Kandhas, since it links them to their past and future and gives them their identity. They see themselves as true owners of the land, hills and forests. Their feasts, festivals, marriages and general mobility have their roots in land. Secret sale of land is not allowed, for transactions are between family groups, and not between individuals."*[XLIII]

[XLI] **Violence in Kandhamal-The other side of the story** P.C. Dogra
[XLII] **Rural Development and Political Participation Among Tribals** pg 26 Pranab Mangaraj Anmol Publications 2003
[XLIII] **Ibid.** pg 30

It is quite obvious that land alienation for the Kandhas means a lot more than mere loss of real estate. It is psychologically the same as if they lost any part of their body or vital organs. Despite such an intense relationship to the land, the Kandhas have lost a majority of their land rights. Pranab Mangaraj highlights this problem as well.

"During the past thirty years, the transfer of land to the non-tribals (Oriyas) has been enormous. Furthermore a few affluent Kandha land-owners started to take land on lease from the poorer and the needy Kandhas. The influence of outsiders has brought about a change of attitude between rich and poor Kandhas based only on the economic differential." "…The tribals find it very difficult to legally defend ownership of their lands and settle possession disputes because of their poverty and total ignorance of the revenue and forest acts."[XLIV]

A recent Lok Sabha, India's House of Representatives, debate from October 24, 2008, presented the 'on the ground realities' regarding Kandhamal. Land alienation was highlighted as a major cause of the turmoil. Shri Kharabela Swain, Member of the Lok Sabha representing Balasore District of Orissa testified to the House.

"*Nearly a year ago, the Scheduled Castes, that is, the Panas -- who have been converted to Christianity -- filed a case in the Supreme Court and they demanded that just like the Gujjars in Rajasthan they should also be given the Scheduled Tribes status. All are very well aware as to what all happened in Rajasthan. When the Gujjars wanted that they should be given Scheduled Tribes status, the Meenas, who were already the tribals, objected to it. The same thing is happening in Kandhmal. In Kandhmal, the Christian Panas are demanding that they should be given the Scheduled Tribes status, and the Kandhas are objecting to it. Why are they objecting to it? … (Interruptions) It is because of the present day rule. What is the present day rule? The rule is that a non-tribal cannot buy a tribal's land, but a tribal can buy another tribal's land. Therefore, the Kandhas or the tribals are thinking that if the Panas or the Scheduled Castes become tribals, then they will buy all the land that belongs to the tribals. This is why they do not want that the Scheduled Castes should be given the status of Scheduled Tribes. … They have two other allegations. The Pana Christians are educationally better off; financially better off; and socially better off by virtue of their better education and by virtue of their better contacts with the Government machinery and they have appropriated most of the land belonging to the tribals. The pattas (ownership titles) of the land which the tribals have been cultivating for hundreds of years have gone to the Scheduled Castes and it was done without their knowledge. That is their objection.*

Representative Kharabela Swain also spoke on the Christian Panas fraudulent use of certificates for government entitlements. *"The second objection is that the Scheduled Castes, who have been converted to Christianity and who are better educated, by manipulation, they have got false certificates as tribals, and they have got Government jobs. Sir, I will not name one person. He is now a Member of the*

[XLIV] **Ibid.**

Rajya Sabha and he is from the Congress Party. He is a Pana Christian, but he has managed to get a false certificate as a tribal and got into the IAS. He is now a Member of the Rajya Sabha. Now, the CBI is investigating the case against him. …

That is the main reason for which the Kandhas or the tribals are totally annoyed with the Panas. They think that it is the Pana Christians who are manipulating everything to deprive the STs of their land and of their jobs. That is major reason. It is not a conflict between the Hindus and the Christians. I will just give them the figures. There are four MLAs from that district and one MP. That hon. MP is sitting here. The hon. MP from that district does not belong to Bajrang Dal; he does not belong to BJP; and he belongs to Biju Janata Dal. You can say that we are communal, but you cannot say the same thing about Mr. Naveen Patnaik or his Party. He is the MP from that locality. Out of four MLAs, two are from Biju Janata Dal, one is from the Congress and one is from the BJP. If you think that Vishwa Hindu Parishad is so powerful there, if Bajrang Dal is so powerful there, why is there only one BJP MLA from that district? It is because Bajrang Dal is never powerful there; Vishwa Hindu Parishad is never powerful there; and we do not have that much of an existence there. … The Bharatiya Janata Party or the Sangh Parivar is actually not against anybody. If there is an ethnic conflict, what we can do about it? Now, if you arrest more and more tribals, adivasis, they will become angry. I told you that the fear of arrest forced the Hindu tribals to flee. I will now read out certain portions from this.… Sir, I will now read out from the Times of India of 13th October this year. This was a report by Mr. Anand Sunda, who is not an Oriya, who was deputed from the headquarters to go to Kandhamal to report on this. What does he report? The headline reads, "Kandhamal Crisis - A Mesh of Conflicting Interests". It says:

"Just that now, with modernization and competitive consumerism that it brings, the Kondhs don't like it when the Panas, relatively better off because of their Christian education, carry better cell phones and live in roomier houses. "They have no business calling themselves scheduled caste after converting to Christianity," said Maheshwar Pradhan, a Kondh. "Eventually, aren't they taking away from what is meant for us?"

"That is what the tribals are saying. The tribals are saying that it is the Pana Christians who manipulated everything; taken everything which belonged to them. What can we do? Why do you just fight with us? You have exploited the tribals of this country. The tribals are against you. And you are making allegations against BJP. …"[XLV]

Another major complication related to the land issue is that posed by the Christians use of encroached lands to build Churches. One report detailing the number of these illegally built churches covers merely 1 block of 1 sub-division of the Kandhamal district.

[XLV] **LOK SABHA DEBATES** (Part I -- Proceedings with Questions and Answers) Friday, October 24, 2008/kartika 2, 1930 (Saka)

CHURCHES LOCATED ON ENCROACHED LAND

Tehasil-Phiringia, Block-Phiringia,
Sub-Division-Baliguda, Dist-Kandhamal

Sl.	Name of the Church	Place of Location	Revenue Village	R.I. Section	No. of church	Remarks
1.	Masiripada	Masiripada	Kutukipada	Bandhagada	1	
2.	Dangirikia	Dangirikia	Dangirikia	Bandhagada	1	
3.	Karandagada	Karandagada	Darandagada	Bandhagada	1	
4.	Taladandikia	Taladandikia	Taladandikia	Bandhagada	2	
5.	Manipadar	Manipadar	Manipadar	Bandhagada	1	
6.	Kelapada	Kelapada	Kelapada	Nuapadar	1	
7.	Sundigaon	Sundigaon	Sundigaon	Nuapadar	1	
8.	Bhrungijodi	Bhrungijodi	Bhrungijodi	Nuapadar	1	
9.	Dimiriguda	Dimiriguda	Dimiriguda	Nuapadar	1	
10.	Tekiringia	Tekiringia	Tekiringia	Phiringia	1	
11.	Panga	Panga	Panga	Nuapadar	1	
12.	Ladapadar	Ladapadar	Ladapadar	Phiringia	1	
13.	Kasinipadar	Salapsahi	Kasinipadar	Phiringia	1	
14.	Sriguni	Sriguni	Sriguni	Gochhapada	1	
15.	Srasananda	Srasananda	Srasananda	Bisipada	1	
16.	Minia	Minia	Minia	Bisipada	1	
	Total				17	

The document reveals that there are 17 different churches located on encroached land. Very few Kandhas have the wherewithal to file legal claims regarding lost property rights. Through recognition of this fact one can easily deduce that that the cases of encroached land are much more numerous than those reflected on the public record. Throughout history, tribes have often been the victims of land grabs and land alienation. Unable to navigate the legal channels or resist the financial and political capabilities and demands of the aggressive Christian Pana, desperation develops. The entire native communities of North and South America, Australia, New Zealand and Africa were victimized in a similar way. The modern and prosperous Nations now present in these lands were built upon the framework of the disenfranchisement of the native tribes.

While the media intentionally portrays the Pana-Kandha conflict as a religious based conflict, the issues are demonstrably related to factors of land, identity and economic concerns. According to the experts on Orissa's tribal issues such ignorance and denial of reality are primary contributors to the tensions. Land alienation has frequently led to outbreaks of violence. Land issues have been stirring up hostilities between the Kandhas and the Christian Panas since the 1970s, if not before. An incident from the recent Kandhamal riots clearly reveals the dynamics of the situation.

In December 2007, the homes of 35 Christian families were attacked. The homes were indeed those of Pana Christians but the land they were built upon was owned by a Kandha tribal named Disuka Mallik. This land was on record as plot # 128 of Barkhama Mauja, Kandhamal. Attempting to regain his land, Disuka Mallik had followed the lawful and legal route. He filed a lawsuit. His lawsuit is filed under case # 271/2001 at Baligauda Court. He won the lawsuit and the encroaching Christian Panas were given a Court order to leave the property. However the order was never enforced by the police or the district administration. The Christian Panas remained on the encroached land. The Kandha man was left in the lurch, his victory hollow. During a protest march organized by the Kandhas, they were attacked from a nearby Christian Pana Church. In response the Kandhas took the opportunity to attack the homes on Lot # 128 in an effort to reclaim their rightful property.[XLVI] However the National and International media referred to the incident as yet '*another horrific incident of anti-Christian ethnic cleansing perpetrated by violent fanatic Hindu supporters of the RSS and BJP*'.

This is just one incident. It clearly proves that the violence is a last resort taken by the Kandhas. There are many more such legal cases of land alienation that are either still pending in the Courts or have been decided in favor of the Kandhas. In most of these cases, despite Court rulings favoring the Kandhas, the Government refuses to act. They have done nothing to remove the Christian Pana squatters or to restore the property rights of the tribes.

[XLVI] **Sambad Newspaper** December 25, 2007

INFORMATION ON REGULATION 2 OF 1956 U/S. 3(2) AND 3(A) CASES FROM 1991 TO 2007.

Year	Cases pending at the beginning of the year	Cases instituted during the year	Total cases for disposal	No. of cases dropped	No. of cases restoration order passed	Area (In Hc.)	No. of cases restored	Area (In Hc.)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1991	54	30	84	11	07	0.575	07	0.575
1992	66	115	181	48	84	6.312	84	6.312
1993	49	27	76	01	45	6.720	45	6.720
1994	30	2188	2218	1382	832	138.620	832	138.620
1995	04	30	34	12	10	2.360	10	2.360
1996	12	95	107	43	40	5.127	40	5.127
1997	24	37	61	24	09	1.654	09	1.654
1998	28	09	37	14	06	1.122	06	1.122
1999	17	09	26	14	10	1.629	10	1.629
2000	02	100	102	19	22	7.275	22	7.275
2001	61	38	99	35	52	7.872	52	7.872
2002	12	80	92	06	38	3.993	27	3.004
2003	48	154	202	04	154	20.935	43	6.085
2004	44	45	89	04	57	9.990	157	22.626
2005	28	20	48	11	15	4.660	22	2.944
2006	22	30	52	03	18	3.244	20	4.001
2007	31	35	66	04	11	2.558	12	2.888
Total	532	3042	3574	1635	1410	224.646	1398	220.814

The above document is a snapshot of the problem. Within the 16 years from 1991 to 2007, 3574 cases of land alienation have been filed by the Kandha. Out of these 3574 cases only 1410 cases have been adjudicated upon. Yet, to this day, most of the land has yet to be restored to the Kandha people. When the law of the land is ignored and abused, the law of the jungle becomes the only recourse towards justice. When there is no justice, there can be no peace. This is not just a saying but a law of nature. These 3574 cases do not merely represent 3574 cases of land alienation. Nor do they represent the claims of only 3574 people.

Each one of these cases represent much more. For behind every one of these is a person with a large social network of families, friends and communities. Thus each case represents the frustrations of hundreds of people. A father's inability to regain his family land is a defeat, a humiliation and a loss to the entire family. The sense of powerlessness is overwhelming. The tight knit Kandha Tribal community is totally interdependent. Unlike the Western family, there are few opportunities to function independently of one's family. Thus 3574 cases of disempowerment, spanning a generation, has a debilitating effect upon an entire people. This translates into thousands of disgruntled, frustrated and violent prone citizens.

Recognizing that there are many more Khanda who do not have the experience and ability to file land claims we can be sure that the cases we do know of are only a partial representation of the problem. The dire consequences of a trauma denied and unresolved are always sudden and explosive. The absolute failure of the Governmental authorities, to carry out the mandates of its judicial branch, represents a fundamental breakdown of the system. This dysfunctionality alone

is enough to disrupt the social harmony of a people. It is obvious that it is a primary cause of the turmoil at the heart of Kandhamal's crisis.

In it, we have identified a major element and the prime ingredient in Kandhamal's dangerous mixture of misery and politics. This breakdown of governance is the ultimate factor leading to the mayhem, death and destruction that has now become synonymous with Kandhamal. As long as land alienation continues and the government acts powerless to enforce its own laws and Court judgments, the violence is bound to continue. This has been validated repeatedly. *"The main issue during this period (1994 Kandhamal riots) was the illegal and forcible possession of lands belonging to ST (Kandha) community by members of SC (Pana) community"*[XLVII]

Eminent writer and native Oriya Mahapatra Nilamani Sahu urged the government to restore the peace but stressed that the socio-economic problems must be addressed first. Otherwise any peace will not last and the resentments and anger will once again overwhelm the district.

As things now stand, dangerous and disruptive forces are taking advantage of the turmoil. The Naxalite or Maoist outfits are benefiting from the lingering tension between the Christian Panas and tribals in areas beyond Kandhamal such as the Gajapati District. They are also gaining supporters based on the land disputes between Bangladeshi migrants and the tribals in the Malkangiri district. According to a former Additional Director General of Police, John Nayak, *"…the Maoists are taking advantage of the existing land disputes to further their own cause. While land settlement records show that Panas are the possessors of land, the tribals maintain that the Panas have fraudulently grabbed their land."*[XLVIII] The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (CPI-ML) Liberation, the Red Flag and the PWG (People's War Group) are gauging the people's response in Gajapati through such conflicts. Within the background of such tensions they plan to launch full-scale activities in other districts like Kandhamal, Kalahandi and Koraput. Therefore these conflicts over land are more significant than they appear at first glance; for they represent a real and immediate threat to the National security of India.

Giving Unto Caesar that Which Belongs to Christ

``This proselytization will mean no peace in the world. Conversions are harmful to India. If I had the power and could legislate, I should certainly stop all proselytizing." Mahatma Gandhi

The first Oriya Conversions to Christianity began during the first decades of the British administration. A majority of Kandhamal's converts are from the Pana community. Either through political consideration or through religious conviction they flocked to the shelter of the

[XLVII] **Kandhamal District Administration Statement** Regarding the Region's Ethnic Concerns
[XLVIII] **Indian Express** 'Officials ignore trouble brewing in Orissa district' January 12, 2000.

Missionaries. Many of these Pana were already enjoying the luxuries provided by their incomes as middlemen. Converting to Christianity gave them the status comparable to that of the sycophantic 'Good Injuns' of the American West. Initially conversion rates were relatively low. The first Kandhamal church was not built until the 1920s. According to scholars, the low conversion rates were not due to a lack of effort on the part of the missionaries. Rather it was due to the people's intense distrust of the British colonial powers. *"Christianity was, after all, closely identified with colonialism and the process that had devastated the world of the adivasis (tribals) and the outcastes."*[XLIX]

After brutal campaigns of savagery, the Kandha, Paikas and Panas were subdued by the British. In the 1864 book *'13 years service Among the Wild Tribes of Kandhastan'* British Colonel John Campbell observed that, *"Foreign conquerors have treated the native Kandhas with violence and often cruelty…It seems to be not only ungenerous but impolitic to debase the character of the people fallen under our dominion."*[L] G.E. Russel, the special commissioner of Ghumusar reveals, "*Numbers of Kandha were shot like wild beats, some were seized and hung up on trees. Their villages were everywhere laid to ashes."*

In a September 2008 report entitled '*Where do we go from here?*' published by a Kandhamal writer, G.T. Rath, raises a significant point. Referring to the British conquest of Kandhamal in the name of stamping out the Meriah human sacrifice cult and infanticide, he states, *"This hostility is also related to the massacre of over 10,000 Kandha people and the burning down of over 1000 Kandha villages by the British in the name of the abolition of the Meriah human sacrifice cult. The number of Kandha people killed by the British far exceeded what the tribals would have sacrificed in 1000 years! The land which was now ethnically cleansed of the Kandhas was handed over to the Panas and other Christian converts."*[LI]

The repercussions of this campaign were such that it led to the creation of a powerful resistance movement. This movement developed means of resistance beyond physical violence. It became a powerful force in the consciousness of the people. It also imposed significant taboos on interactions with the British and converted Christians. These taboos were strict and unwavering. During famines many preferred to die than break the taboo. This mode of resistance was uncompromising. Anyone who accepted famine relief from the British lost their social status and became as outcastes. "*This was especially triggered off by the post-1866 Famine context, which made life extremely difficult - even for those who survived -if they had accepted relief ("chattra') from the centers established by the colonial administration since they were ex-communicated.*

[XLIX] **Identity, Hegemony, Resistance: Conversions in Orissa œ 1800-2000** Dr. Biswamoy Pati
[L] **13 years service Among the Wild Tribes of Kandhaistan** Colonel John Campbell 1864
[LI] **Where Do We Go from Here?** September 2008

We witness the emergence of Chattra Khia as a new caste(outcaste), directly associated with this period."[LII]

A new social code of conduct was created and along with it came a new formula in the practice of the tribal religion. It became popularly known as the Mahima cult and was officially called 'Satya Mahima Dharma'. It became a influential force impacting the political awareness of the people. The leaders of the Mahima cult developed an all encompassing outlook and in some ways appeared to emulate Christian missionary methodologies. The cult became a powerful religious socio-political force that was uniquely suited to the needs of the community. Dynamic preachers such as the blind Kandha Saint Bhima Bhoi spread the Mahima doctrine throughout the region. *"The poet prophet of this religion was Bhima Bhoi, whose tomb at Khaliapali village situated at a distance of around 12 km to the west of Sonepur town has become a place of pilgrimage for the followers of his faith. The Mahimaites touch no prasad or tulsi leaf or medicine. They entertain no casteism or idolatry or belief in spirits..." It is a phenomenon of great significance that Bhima Bhoi belonging to the Kandha tribe became the progenitor of a religious system which disowns the caste system and idolatry."* [LIII]

Despite having been defeated by the British in war and having submitted to the political control of their administration, the Kandhas resisted the British on the spiritual and cultural level. Meanwhile, the British administration maintained their policy of refraining from overtly challenging or undermining the native religious ethos and traditions.

In this regard it is fitting to mention that unlike the previous non-Hindu rulers of Orissa, the British administrators were careful to respect Jagannath. Jagannath had been burnt by the fanatic Muslim Kalapahar after the occupation of Orissa by the Afghans of Bengal in 1568. Kalapahar was a vigorous iconoclast, and he was well aware of the role that Vishnu Jagannatha had played in Orissan politics. [LIV]

Just before their arrival to Puri, the British sent a letter to the priests at the Jagannath temple. Upon receipt of this letter, the Priests left the decision to Lord Jagannath. According to the Brahmins their deity Jagannath had accepted the British as his new guardian. *"Interestingly the process began with the taking over of Orissa in 1803 itself. We are told about how the governor-general had made a "famous pandit of Bengal' write a letter assuring the Puri Brahmins of the religious tolerance of the British. Shortly before reaching Puri, the British troops were informed by the priests that 'they had*

[LII] **Identity, Hegemony, Resistance: Conversions in Orissa œ 1800-2000** Dr. Biswamoy Pati
[LIII] **Mahima Dharma, Bhima Bhoi and Biswanath baba** by Bhagirathi Nepak Orissa Review May - 2005
[LIV] **Lives of Indian Images** pg 140 Richard H. Davis

applied to Juggernaut' who had a 'decided answer' that the English Government was in future to be his guardian."[LV]

It is also important to remember that Christian missionaries were officially banned by the British East India Company from 1765 till 1813. The reason behind this policy is significant to our understanding of modern India as well. *"Beginning in 1765, the British East India Company maintained a policy banning missionary activity in India as a consequence of the belief that doing so would minimize the potential for violent disruptions and political instability caused by interference in indigenous cultural life."*[LVI]

Recognizing that successful administration of India depended upon social harmony, they strictly curtailed not only conversion but any preaching that publicly challenged the Native religions. In this environment, the Mahima cult flourished and Christian conversions were at a minimum. As the decades passed the intensity of the anti-British movement mellowed. By the first half of the 20th century the Mahima cult was an established tradition in its own right. For a time, Christianity also functioned within the indigenous framework of Orissa. A well known Oriya Christian, Madhusudan Das , exemplified the harmonious Christian-Hindu relationship.

"He was "the uncrowned king of Orissa." "…He adopted Christianity in the year 1869. During 1873 while he was studying in Bethun College of Calcutta he got married to the daughter of a revolutionary Christian priest. His wife died five years from the date of marriage. After that he did not marry. He had adopted a girl as his daughter. Although he was a Christian he had love for Hindu religion. He fought for the King of Puri claiming for his rights over the Jagannath temple at the court and won the case. Although a Christian he had never forgotten the age-old pride and importance of the Oriya culture."[LVII]

Despite the harsh and prejudicial agenda of its early missionaries, Christians became a part of the cultural milieu of Orissa. As exemplified by eminent Oriya leaders like Madhusudan Das, Orissa's Christians shared in the pleasures and pains of their fellow Oriyans. We find a clear example of this in the Christian No-Rent rebellion of the late 1930s.

"This created the basis for a no-rent movement in the state. Out of a population of 60,000 Mundas there were 17,000 Lutherans and the rest were Roman Catholics. The Lutheran Mundas rebelled and it is possible that they were translating into action the plebeianised version of Christianity as preached by their 'native' preachers, in line with their own perceptions, since the Lutheran mission was initially indifferent to the movement. In contrast, the Roman Catholic Church found the rent hike to be reasonable

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[LV] **Juggernaut Under British Supremacy and the Resurgence of the Khurda Rajas as Rajas of Puri** Hermann Kulke

[LVI] **Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation** Sufia M. Uddin 2006

[LVII] **Freedom Fighter -Madhusudan Das** http://www.orissa.net/eminentpersons/madhusudandas.asp

and felt that in the long run this would be beneficial to the people since they would work harder. Its hold seems to have been quite strong since its position was largely accepted by its following. By the end of March 1939 the no-rent movement was launched. Nearly 5,000 Lutheran Mundas withheld rent, though the rest of the Lutherans and the Catholics continued to petition against the durbar (court). As the movement gathered momentum the position of the Lutheran establishment shifted from indifference to anxiety. Two Munda pleaders from Ranchi and the 'native' preachers influenced its following. In its anxiety the durbar approached the Lutheran Church Council (Ranchi) to send a deputation to negotiate with the rebellious Mundas. The deputation reached Gangpur in early April, but failed in its efforts. In fact, after this the secretary of the Church advised the diwan to take strong measures since, he felt, only this would make the Mundas"see reason'. This precipitated ruthless terror directed against the Mundas, in which thirty-two people died and nineteen were injured in course of a police firing. Rebellion shows the pluralities associated with Christianity in Orissa. Instead of being a legitimizing component of the durbar, one witnesses its subversive character in Gangpur. Thus, in course of the rebellion the Mundas not only rose against the durbar and its exploitative practices, but also refused to accept the codes of the Church and confronted colonialism. In this way Christianity was transformed by some 'native' preachers, and interpreted by the Munda converts to become a weapon in their struggle, demonstrates its complexities and pluralities, given its association with popular aspirations and militancy."[LVIII]

The 1939 no-rent movement of the Mundas is quite illuminating. In it we see an instance of popular resistance, Church indifference, police brutality and the application of Indian Christianity into a potent tool for revolution. In the above instance we also see a foreshadowing of events in the Kandhamal of today. The Panas have similarly transformed their Christianity into a powerful political weapon and a shield. Unlike the Mundas, the Christian Panas have the comprehensive support of the Church. By successfully grafting their ethnic identity onto the global Christian community, their agenda and demands have been popularized far beyond the confines of Kandhamal proper.

After WW II, Western based Christian evangelists developed a World conversion agenda. It was partially organized as a response to that other conversionary movement known as Communism. India has long been a primary target for both of these conversionary movements. The impact and examples of this campaign are obvious and impacting,

A well circulated document entitled, "*AD 2000 Plan for Orissa"* by Reverend Pariccha has caused consternation amongst many Oriyas. Within this document is a detailed breakdown of Orissa's villages, districts, towns, cities, police stations and more. Included is a list of village Police stations with Christian officers in order to *"Identify the least evangelized areas."* This is an obvious proof of the predatory mindset at work. Their admitted focus is areas with the least Christians.

[LVIII] **Issues in Modern Indian History** Sumit Sarkar, Biswamoy Pati pg 221 2000

The 'AD 2000 Plan for Orissa" document verifies this intention by stating, *"Its purpose is to survey and research to find out the exact population of the 'Unreached People groups…to make available all statistics from all possible sources that are required for strategic planning to reach the unreached."*

Its goals are listed as:

1. That Orissa may be won for Christ.

2. To reach every major people group

3. To reach every village and plant churches.

4. To send missionaries to every unreached Pin Code area.

The comprehensive and strategic methodologies revealed are perceived as an assault on the very cultural fabric and identity of Orissa. The very foundation of the plan and its stated goals say loud and clear that, *"Orissa's non-Christians are in darkness and that their religion, culture and traditions are of little or no value and need to be replaced."*

Christians will defend this effort as their right and duty. The fact is because they have not come to add to the native spirituality of Orissa, but rather have come to replace it, they are engaged in an aggressive hostility. Rather than taking a page out of the books of the many Indian spiritualists like Assam's Shankardeb, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Vivekananda, Paramahamsa Yogananda, and others, they attempt to supplant people's faith. The luminaries of India have a tradition based upon the enhancement of the culture from within indigenous framework. An even more succinct example would be the Parsi Indian experience.

The Parsis arrived in India around 1,000 years ago. An oral tradition has it that the Parsis arrived on the coasts of Gujarat from Persia to escape religious persecution at the hands of Arab Islamic conversionists. The Gujarat ruler, Jadi Rana, somewhat puzzled at their arrival, sent them a jug with milk filled to the brim to symbolically indicate that there was no space for them. The Parsis added sugar in the milk and sent it back, hinting that they would integrate themselves in a harmonious manner.

The Parsis added the sugar to the milk, implying that they would be accommodative without overwhelming the population,"[LIX] In other words the Parsis replied by saying that just as the sugar had sweetened the milk without overflowing it, their presence will similarly sweeten India without any disruption. The King, impressed with this potent and symbolic sign of benevolence welcomed the Parsis with open arms. To this day the Parsis are amongst the greatest contributors to India, its society and nation. It is this kind of respect and loving mood

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[LIX] **Sugar In Milk: Lives of Eminent Parsis** Bakhtiar K. Dadabhoy

that harnesses the goodwill and support of a people. Thus if the Christian Missionary had come to add some sugar to the milk that is India rather than vinegar, there would be no tension.

The impact of Christian missionaries has never been negligible and has always been accompanied by consequences beyond the stated mission. A recent conference *"Christian Missions and National Identities: Comparative Studies of Cultural 'Conversions' in the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and East Asia"* explored this phenomenon. It was organized by Heather J. Sharke, Department of Near Eastern, Languages & Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania and sponsored by the Middle East Center, African Studies Center, Center for East Asian Studies, South Asia Center, Graduate School of Education, University Research Foundation, and the Department of Near Eastern
Languages & Civilizations (NELC).

"This two-day conference will provide a forum for the comparative study of Christian missions within colonial and postcolonial societies in Africa, the Middle East, East Asia, and South Asia. It responds to a history in the nineteenth and twentieth century's, when Christian missionaries from Europe and North America expanded into parts of the Africa and Asia in tandem with Western imperialism. Protestant and Catholic missionaries developed schools, hospitals, printing presses, and other social service projects, which they regarded as vehicles for propagating Christianity. Through these initiatives, missionaries exerted far-reaching influences on colonial societies, and had an impact even on individuals and groups that rejected or resisted religious overtures. In some places, individuals and communities embraced Christianity but refashioned it in line with their own cultural traditions and values – thereby contributing in the long run to the emergence of heterogeneous non-Western Christian cultures. In other places, missionaries galvanized anti-colonial nationalists and sharpened corporate conceptions of non-Christian identities, notably among Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, and Buddhist communities that already had strong literary traditions. Missionary work sometimes led, more generally, to the reconfiguration of family relations, gender relations, and even relations between young and old. By changing notions of power and property, missionary work sometimes affected economic relations as well. In these ways, missionary encounters led to cultural "conversions" or transformations that were varied, often ambiguous, and frequently unintended or unexpected. At the same time, these transformations were often reciprocal insofar as missionary encounters had reverberations for mission-sponsoring societies."[LX]

Indian Christians have also recognized the impact of Christian conversion on India's socio-political structures. They have recognized its impact as a major contributing factor towards the political upheaval of Kandhamal.

[LX] **Christian Missions and National Identities: Comparative Studies of Cultural 'Conversions' in the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and East Asia** '*Conference*' University of Pennsylvania April 10-11, 2008

Pastor Enoch Era of Hyderabad Christian Aradhana Fellowship writes, *"One major immediate cause is the socio-economic and socio-political reason of the imbalance in growth and development between the two dominant tribes in Kandhamal, the district in Orissa, which has seen one of the worst kinds of violence possibly in the history of the Church in India. One of the two tribes (Panos, a Dalit group) in Kandhamal responded to the gospel and these Christians are now better-educated and live in better conditions economically. Some of who do enjoy the dual benefit of a good education as well as benefits given by the government for tribals. The other tribe (Kandha) still remains backward in many ways and this is a cause for heartburn among them against those who converted to Christianity, that they not only enjoy the benefits from missionaries but also from the Government..."*[LXI]

An Indian Government Commission was set up in 1955 to investigate the impact of Christian conversion in India. Headed by Dr M.B. Niyogi, the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee of Nagpur, Madhya Pradesh directly stated that *"As conversion muddles the convert's sense of unity and solidarity with his society, there is a danger of his loyalty to his country and State being undermined. A vile propaganda against the religion of the majority community is being systematically and deliberately carried on so as to create an apprehension of breach of public peace."* It expressed many other serious concerns regarding the negative methods and impacts of the missionaries in India. It outlined several significant recommendations[LXII]

The Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee, appointed by the Madhya Pradesh Government consisting of six citizens including Mr. S. K. George, a Professor of Commerce, a devout Christian belonging to the oldest church in India, the Syrian Christian Church, and presided over by the retired Chief Justice of the Nagpur High Court, Mr. M. B. Niyogi which visited 77 centers, contacted 11,360 people from 700 villages, examined 375 written statements, visited hospitals, schools, churches, leper homes, hostels, etc. and after 2 years of arduous labor has made the following recommendations:

1. Those missionaries whose primary objective is proselytization should be asked to withdraw. The large influx of foreign missionaries is undesirable and should be checked.

2. The best course for the Indian churches was to establish a united independent Christian church in India being independent of foreign support.

3. The use of medical and other professional services as a means of conversion should be prohibited by law.

[LXI] **Response to the Incidents of Violence Against Christians** Pastor Enoch Era Hyderbad's Aradhana Christian Fellowship *http://streetsofgold.multiply.com/journal/item/182*

[LXII] **Report of the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee Madhya Pradesh** 'A summary of recommendations made by the Niyogi Committee' 2 volumes 3 parts

4. To implement the provision in the Constitution of India prohibiting the imparting of religious education to children without consent of parents and guardians.

5. Suitable control of conversions brought through illegal means should be imposed and if necessary, through legislative measures.

6. Advisory boards at State, regional and district levels should be constituted of non-officials, minority communities like tribals and harijans being a majority on these boards.

7. Rules relating to registration of doctors and nurses employed in hospitals should be suitably amended to provide a condition against evangelistic activities during professional services.

8. Circulation of religious literature meant for propaganda without the approval of the State Government should be prohibited.

9. Institutions in receipt of grants-in-aid or recognition from government should be compulsorily inspected every quarter.

10. No non-official agency should be permitted to secure foreign assistance except through government channels.

11. Government should lay down a policy that providing social services like education, health, medicine, etc. to scheduled classes will be solely by the State Government, and adequate services should be provided as early as possible, non-official organizations being permitted to run only for members of their own faith.

12. No foreigner should be allowed to function in a scheduled or a specific area either independently or as a member of a religious institution unless he has given a declaration in writing that he will not take part in politics.

13. Programs of social and economic uplift by non-official or religious bodies should receive the prior approval of the State

Over 50 years later, not one of these recommendations has been adopted. The problems however remain. They have become endemic leading to widespread apprehension.

A local Oriya Christian leader, Anand Das, of Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa revealed that within the last 30 years a change had taken place amongst the Christian activist in the State. Anand Das is a 5th generation Christian from a Brahmin family. Before his retirement he was the President of the YMCA and director of the Catholic relief fund and several other Christian institutions. According to his testimony the situation changed drastically after several a new waves of aggressive Christian groups appeared on the scene. *“In the past 30 years or so new and aggressive*

Christian NGOs appeared on the scene. Their methods and style alienated many people including the Christian community in Orissa. The NGO World Vision has been particularly aggressive and has been the major contributor to the communal tensions." [LXIII]

Thousands of new churches sprouted in the land as proclamations of a Triumphalist form of Christianity arose as if in challenge to the non-converted. Though intensely denied claims of conversion through inducements, such as financial, gifts, graft, employment, free education and medical benefits encouraged a massive growth spurt in the Christian population of Kandhamal. According to the census results spanning the years 1961 to 2001 a pattern emerged revealing an extreme and unnatural fluctuation in the increase of the Christian population. Lacking any evidence of a mass devotional movement of historic proportions or any revelatory transformational spiritual revolution such a dramatic increase is quite curious. Such events have obvious markers that are clearly identifiable by their tumultuous crescendos of dynamic and euphoric spirituality. No records or testimonials or hint of such an event having occurred in Kandhamal has yet to be identified or discovered.

The fact is that within 10 years alone the Christian population had exploded by 66%. Another baffling aspect of this phenomenon is that it has been contained within a certain geographical region. This alone collapses the theory that the Christian conversion is based on the devotional waves of a revelatory movement. Such movements never remain region-specific without the imposition of political or geographical barriers. The only other explanation for such a dramatic and drastic increase would be migration. Again we find absolutely no evidence of any such massive migrations within the past few decades. Reproduction also cannot account for such a population boom. One valid explanation could be that the Christians did not reveal their true identities in the earlier census for fear of losing their S.C. status. This is plausible but not true. The factual basis of this population boom is a conversion movement that has gone into overdrive mode. The clear and apparent objective is the Christianization of Kandhamal.

The unnatural spike in the growth of Kandhamal's Christian population reflects a major change in the social dynamics of the region. District Collector Krishna Kumar, *"The Christian growth rate in the district is 66% as against 18% for the overall population growth in the district."* The District Collector is a Central Indian Government appointee who is in charge of the governance of a district in a state. According to Dr Krishna Kumar, the District Collector of Kandhamal, such a demographic change can only be explained in two ways, *"It could because of two reasons, conversion and migration."* Migration is not a plausible explanation. Therefore the only explanation is that a massive conversion effort is taking place. It may be argued that such an effort represents an expression of freewill guaranteed in any democracy. However the evidence

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[LXIII] **Author's Interview with Anand Das** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 25, 2008

does not support this view. The use of inducements and material rewards are on record. According to Orissa Police records, case # (97/08) was filed at the Durgadevi Police station in which a complaint was filed against some Christians.

A rumor was spreading around Durgadevi village that Christians were offering medicine free of monetary charge but at the cost of conversion. Local resident Jay ant Kumar Jena reported that he went to get some free medicine but was asked to first convert to Christianity. In his FIR (First Incident Report) he stated that the Christians told him that before he could get any medicine he would have to convert. He refused. He was then threatened and forced to leave the medical camp. When the word spread, the villagers gathered at the free medicine camp and detained 5 Christians until the police arrived. The police than brought the 5 to the station for investigation. This incident was reported on by the Statesman News Service, (9/23/08). The report by the Statesman News added that Inspector Kailash Parida acknowledged the situation was under control and the 5 Christians have been detained and that the investigation is on. According to the Statesman*, "Probable communal tension at Durgadevi village was averted today-following timely intervention of the Police.* [LXIV]

The use of inducements has long been a functioning part of the missionary efforts. A report *'Results of Missionary Labors in India'* dating back to the 1840s by Reverend Mr. Mullins, published in the Calcutta Review clearly delineates the overall outlook of the early Christians in India. *"By far the greatest progress has been made in South India, in the provinces of Tinnevelley and Travancore. Missionary work has long been carried on in these districts, and the people are far more open to the Gospel than other Hindoos. In Travancore there is a native Government, and the Brahmins are numerous and powerful...The causes, which led to such a rapid progress of Christianity among them, are readily discernable. Their religion sat very lightly on them; their caste is low; the religion of the Europeans was, of course, looked upon with favor.*

In Travancore a special reason existed. Many years ago, General Munro procured an order from the Rani, that Christians should be exempted from work on their Sabbath, and from employment in the Hindoo festivals. These circumstances have contributed much towards the easy passage of so many converts from Heathenism to Christianity. The whole number, now under instruction, we reckon to be 52,000. It must not, however, be supposed that they are all true Christians. None know this better,, or have spoken it more plainly, than the missionaries, who instruct them. Yet had they only given up their abominable devil-worship, a great thing would have been accomplished. But they have done more. They have placed themselves under an evangelical ministry; they regularly attend public worship: more than 17,000 children and young people are daily instructed in Christian schools, some of whom are being educated as teachers and others as preachers to their countrymen…if societies are faithful, and missionaries faithful,

[LXIV] **Statesman News Service** September 23, 2008

we may hope, in two or three generations, to see the whole of the southern provinces of India entirely Christianized."[LXV]

A recent report from South India presents a snapshot of the current impacts of predatory evangelism. ATTAPPADI/THIRUNELLI*: In the tribal colonies at Trisseleri, the home village of firebrand tribal leader C K Janu, conversion by various Pentecostal orders is taking place at a feverish pace. The young couple Premela and Maniyan of Kottiyoor Adiya colony in the sixth ward of Thirunelli panchayat of the tribal belt in Wayanad, is passing through a difficult predicament similar to Kala Mooppen's. All 11 families, except them, have been converted. Now the couple feels like fish out of water. They face boycotts by other families. However, the 20 families in the nearby Thundukappu Kattunayikker colony have been resisting the pressures to change their faith. "We are being offered money, rice and cloth. They tell us that if we are converted, we will not die, won't fall ill and will enjoy a fortune," said Sajitha, a girl who passed 10th standard, a rare achievement in the community. The Thirunelli forest area is prone to conversion as the Tribals here do not have much contact with the outside world. Attappadi, the no man's land and the largest Adivasi (tribal) belt in the state, is a safe haven for evangelists. There is not a single colony in the total 185, where conversion is not taking place. All the human settlements in the area are dotted with churches or chapels belonging to various denominations. A new church sprouts almost every week in Attapadi. Evangelists of various Pentecostal orders daily visit the Adivasi hamlets offering them gifts and preaching the earthly comforts that will be brought by the new faith".*

During my fact-finding mission in Orissa I interviewed Dr Mishra, the former Chancellor of NOU (North Orissa University) Dr Rath Vice Chancellor of NOU and Prof Sahu of the NOU Tribal studies Program. I was able to obtain first hand information regarding India's tribal condition. NOU is the location of the India's (and the World's) only Indian Tribal Studies Program. I interacted with the professors and students and was thus able to gain an accurate perspective of the challenges facing India's tribal communities.

Dr Rath: "*Christian Missionaries taught the primitive peoples to challenge tradition. Just as Martin Luther taught the people of Germany to challenge religion. He protested against the authority of the Pope thus he was called Protestant. In a similar way the Missionaries went all over the world teaching people to challenge authority.*"

Dr Mishra: *"Socially the Christian missionaries have no doubt done some very good works so far as health care and education is concerned. They have given them some hope to these people of these tribal belts. However one thing has gone against them and it definitely has a part to play in the violence. One particular problem has troubled the minds of the tribals and that is conversion. So the Christian efforts to convert the Hindus into Christians have created religious conflict."*

[LXV] **The administration of the East India company; a history of Indian progress,** pg 652 Sir John William Kaye 1853

Dr Rath: *"It is because of that conflict society is getting disturbed. This religious conversion impact has to be admitted."*

Dr Mishra: *"I will come to the point directly. The works of the missionaries in regards to conversion has caused great divisions in the family. If there are two brothers in a family and one is Christian and the other Non-Christian the two then have two different social beliefs. There is a clash between these two social beliefs. If one of these brothers is empowered by the privileges granted by the Indian Constitution the other can not avail of these same privileges."*

Dr Rath: "*As for the Kandhamal area today we see one group, the converted are better off through the benefits provided by a proper education. Meanwhile the non-converted tribals are not well-off because they do not get a proper education, merely because they are not converted. When they make a comparison to see whether 'my brother is better off than me or not. If he is better off than me then I become jealous.' This is simple and basic human psychology. Thus there is a conflict within the same family, in one village or one family there are now two different and conflicting social and value systems set in one place. One has got education and economic progress and the other does not have education and he is socially depressed. Any spark sets them off. The underprivileged party feels,' you are celebrating some occasion while I die of starvation.' There is a lot of jealousy and mental instability that leads to clashes*."

Dr Mishra: *"Missionaries are creating problems. The administration, even during British times was for all people. However the Missionaries are only for their community. Only for the Christian community. They will not look to the welfare of the non-Christian community whereas the Govt looks to the welfare of both Christians and non-Christians. The govt has always been more impartial. The Missionaries however made a bargain with the tribal people that we will take care of health and education and we will give you what you need provided you convert yourself to Christianity."*

Dr Rath: "*No doubt the Christians have done good works but as Dr Mishra pointed out, but these good works are for those that have converted to their religion. So this has summed up into people being divided into converted and non-converted and thus all this turmoil. This is the background to this current Kandhamal situation."*

Dr Mishra: "*Under the British Education was limited. Nowadays education has spread to every nook and corner of India. Once a man is educated you give him power. He becomes a force which must be recognized by one and all. An illiterate man is a dumb fellow. He cannot react to a situation but an educated man will always react if the situation is unfavorable to his interests. So the British were lucky that India was by and large illiterate during their rule. The present administration is unlucky because it is ruling over millions of educated citizens that have been empowered through education. As an example I may not agree with the vice-chancellor on some points and vice versa. Such disagreement comes from being educated. We can think for ourselves."*

Professor Laxman Kumar Sahu of the (NOU) North Orissa University Tribal Studies Dept. also revealed some vital facts regarding India's tribal concerns and the impact of conversion.

"The converted SCs have become well to do and the STs have remained poor. So while the Christians have done good social work something is amiss. We must all support development and the social upliftment of the tribals but we should not motivate them to change their religion. As our first Prime Minister Pandit Nehru and the former Christian missionary Verrier Elwin had a vision. This vision was that Tribal development must be made without undermining the traditional rights and cultures of the tribes. Nehru was keen that development must be made without destroying the Indigenous culture. Development should uphold their rights in accordance with modern rules and regulations. NGOs approach is to focus on development but the Christian Missionary approach is to offer development which somehow or another motivates people to change their religion to Christianity. The question is why and how has the Christian population increased so drastically in Kandhamal if the missionaries are solely focused on development? Christian groups, and some well known NGOs as well, are causing a lot of trouble in the tribal regions of India. The Govt is failing to provide the basic requirements to the tribes so these groups have stepped in and our taking advantage of the situation. For the Tribal person Nature is their God. So we see that the Christians are doing their social work yet after some years we find these same people are suddenly practicing Christianity and not Naturism. So logically people feel that there is a conscious effort being made to convert people away from their original traditions. So when the SC Panas and Tribals give up the old ways and convert, people become suspicious of the motivations of the Christians. That's why the clashes are continuing in Kandhamal. Nature worship is a way of life for them. When people close to them become Christians clashes take place between the people who have kept the old ways and the converts. In Kandhamal there are now over 1500 Churches but 20 years back there were only about 300. How did this happen? That is the point. This proves that a vast conversion effort is taking place."[LXVI]

The impact of this conversion drive is having severe ramifications upon the socio-political climate of the State. An obvious sign of this is the politicization of the society. An indication of this politicization is reflected in the recent statements of the King of Orissa. The King, Gajapati Maharaj Dibya Singh Deb has always avoided political issues. He has maintained his role as a benevolent Father figure to all the people of Orissa. However the upheaval in Kandhamal, particularly the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and the violence that followed, forced him to break with tradition. For the first time, he spoke out on current events and political issues. *"This is a do or die situation. The attack on Swamiji is an attack on the basic foundations of Indian culture. Unless the Hindus unite, the future of Hindu Dharma may be lost within 50 years. Clearly the efforts of a particular community patronizing conversion and cow slaughter in Kandhamal have created feelings of great resentment. The Government should not allow such organizations to carry out large-scale conversion in the name of service."* Focusing on the startling

[LXVI] **Author Interview with Prof Sahu of NOU Tribal Studies Program** September 20,2008

growth of Christians in Kandhamal King Gajapati Maharaj Dibya Singh Deb quoted the statistics in this regard.

"In 1961, the Hindu population of Kandhamal was at 304,459 while Christians at 1,928 and Muslims numbered 328. 10 years later, in 1971, the figure of Hindus was recorded at 354,769 while Christians recorded at 37,561 and Muslims at 1427. By 1981 the Hindus numbered 405,251; Christians were at 42,264, Muslims at 1325 and others at 45. The 1991 census recorded 468,869 Hindus, 75,597 Christians and 1739 Muslims and others at 2. By 2001 the population numbers were, Hindus at 527,757 where as Christian population reached at 117,954, Muslims at 2253 and others at 58. From the above mentioned fact sheet, one could imagine the impact of conversion on Kandhamal's population. We realize that conversion and cow slaughtering are the two main reasons behind the communal unrest in Kandhamal. We demand a complete ban on all organizations involved in unlawful conversion and cow slaughter."[LXVII]

This call for a ban on religious conversions was echoed by many across the political spectrum. The National Congress Party also demanded a complete ban on religious conversion within the State of Orissa. Addressing a Press conference on September 5th, 2008, National Congress Party Orissa State President Mr. Bijoy Mahapatra announced, *"It is high time that the people take up the issue without waiting for the non-responsive State Government."*[LXVIII]

The Sikh organization Orissa Sikh Pratinidhi Board also urged the State Government to enforce the anti-conversion law and put a stop to conversion. This demand was made by the Sikh Board's Harbhajan Singh on September 2, 2008 in Bhuvaneshwar.[LXIX]

Dr. U. P. Patri, a member of India's Orthodox Bahai community, is a Reader in Dept. of English in Bolangir College, Orissa. He is a academic supervisor for students writing their Ph.D. He is also a visiting lecturer in the U.S., Canada and Germany. Professor Patri is a noted educationist having a laudable knowledge over the Quran and Bible. He is a prolific author having written many books in both Oriya, Hindi and English on the subjects of world religion. His research and writings on the Hindu links to the works of Emerson and other American Transcendentalists earned him accolades and recognition throughout the world. During the recent violence in Kandhamal, he was visited by representatives of the US Embassy who sought out his opinion on the crisis. I also met with him to get his perspective on the issue.

"The assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati shocked millions of people, not only in Kandhamal or even in Orissa but throughout the entire country. For the tribals of Kandhamal he was seen as an avatar of Vishnu (God). The Swami had aggravated the Christian leadership through his efforts,

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LXVII **Express News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 2, 2008 **Pioneer News Service** September 2, 2008
LXVIII **Statesman News Service** September 6, 2008
LXIX **New Indian Express News Service** September 2, 2008

specifically through his re-conversion and anti-cow slaughter drives. Earlier in the 1970s, a Swami from the Arya Samaj, Brahmananda Saraswati reconverted many Christians back to the Hindu fold. At the time there were very few incidents of violence because the Christians did not receive any specialized treatment from the Government. The atmosphere was a lot less volatile at the time..before the attempts by the Christian Panas to be listed as tribals and their ongoing and rampant use of forged caste certificates to usurp jobs and benefits reserved for the Kondh tribals. In other words, becoming a Christian or remaining a Hindu had nothing to do with anyone's potential economic or political aspirations. Thus the ramifications of reconversion were not as threatening to the Church. In my analysis, the allegations that the RSS or VHP are accountable for the violence are baseless. The tribal Hindus clashed with the Christians from a sense of outrage. The killing of Swami Lakshmananda caused great and enormous anguish to them. Their sense of loss is palpable and their response, though severe and regrettable, is understandable. As long as the authentic foundation of the turmoil is obscured by the media and politicians it will be virtually impossible to stem the violence."[LXX]

P.N. Benjamin, Indian Christian Activist and founder of the Bangalore Initiative for Religious Dialogue (B.I.R.D.) stated, *"These groups must end aggressive faith-marketing. Witnessing Jesus cannot in any case be done by questionable means such as exploiting people's socio-psychological vulnerabilities or by running down other religions….Christian fundamentalists must accept the pluralistic tradition of the Hindus. The Hindus consider all religions as equal."* [LXXI]

C. Alex Alexander, an Indian Christian Former Chief of Staff US Department of Veterans Affairs, Hospital Director and Regional Chief Medical Officer and Colonel in the US Army Medical Corps identified several points of concern regarding conversionary tactics. He quotes the Holy Bible, *"Jesus himself appears to have condemned prostelyzation when he said, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for ye compass the sea and land to make one convert and when he is made, ye make him twice as fit for hell as you are."* Mishra continues, *"Christianity, as it is practiced in the West, has become insensitive to the emotional violence inflicted on the poorest of the poor when inducements such as free food, medical care, money and employment are used as baits to engineer religious conversions."*

The Poor Christian Liberation Movement based in Delhi has been bringing the plight of India's suffering Christians to the limelight. In a recent statement, its leaders referred to 'Rice Christians' or people that covert as a means to feeding themselves. *"We feel that the time has come for pluralistic societies to be accepted. It has already been done in Western countries. Therefore, the focus on fraudulent conversions and on increasing the number of 'Rice Christians' does not really serve the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church in India needs to promote Multiculturalism and Interfaith dialogue."*

LXX **Author Interview with Dr U. P. Patri** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 30, 2008
LXXI **Author Interview with P.N. Benjamin** and also quoted in Deccan Herald September 23, 2008

In neighboring Sri Lanka, the Catholic Church issued a public declaration expressing 'unequivocal disapproval' of the 'unethical conversions by fundamentalist Christian sects, particularly by the more radical elements."

'Church Distances Itself from "Unethical" Conversions'
"The Catholic Church is trying to distance itself from some Christian groups that have come under criticism in this Buddhist-majority nation for bribing poor people to convert. An anti-Christian backlash has led to attacks on Catholic churches, and fueled demands for a law to ban what some Buddhist monks call "unethical conversions. "Against this backdrop the Catholic bishops' conference issued a statement." We, the bishops of the Catholic Church of Sri Lanka," the statement says, "are deeply conscious of the social unrest alleged to be caused by certain activities of the fundamentalist Christian sects, particularly by the more radical elements." "It must be stated that the Catholic Church is not associated in any way with any of these sects," the statement says. "We do not support any of the measures, such as material enticements or undue pressures that are alleged to be made by these groups in order to carry out so-called unethical conversions . "We express our grave concern over the recent increase in religious tension in our country. At this time we wish to reiterate our resolve in united Sri Lanka in which people of all faiths and beliefs would live together in harmony with dignity and mutual respect. We are aware that the present climate is due to the concern that "unethical" conversions from one religion to another are taking place. We too express our unequivocal disapproval on the use of material enticements to gain converts. It is indeed important to find effective ways to deal with this issue if we are to create an atmosphere of religious amity devoid of suspicion. We need to come up with a method that is fair and dignified and one that will actually diffuse tensions and promote religious harmony."[LXXII]

Notably Christian Churches were attacked in Sri Lanka without the participation of the RSS, VHP, BJP or Bajrang Dal. The same irritants that have contributed to the attacks upon Churches in Sri Lanka are prevalent in India as well.

The words of David Sherman, an Oregon, USA based Catholic scholar, historian, researcher and monk go to the heart of the matter. *"Until we Christians set aside our prejudice and look for our Lord in the traditions of other religions, we will go on focusing on where he isn't and entirely miss where he is. Christian missionaries have sinned against the Holy Spirit in their attitudes towards peoples they perceived as unbelievers or as worshippers of demigods or false gods. This offence to the Lord is the reason billions of souls today remain alienated from Christ's visible church. If we humbly search these traditions for evidence of the work and spirit of God, we will discover that Jesus is already among them. When we act out of prejudice and ethnic or "spiritual pride,' we offend the Holy Spirit and we cannot recognize our*

[LXXII] **Zenit News** 'Church Distances Itself From "Unethical" Conversions' Columbo, Sri Lanka, January 21, 2004

own spiritual brothers and sister." David Sherman wrote this in a September 1999 letter to Father Karl as he embarked on his secret preaching mission to China.[LXXIII]

Such a clarion call for a return to the path walked by the Christ himself is the need of the hour. Recognition of the Christ amongst the sacred traditions of humanity is the true calling of a preacher and missionary. Currently that focus has been lost. Thus not only are the sensibilities and cultural sensitivities of non-Christians being undermined, the plight of many Indian Christians is pitiable.

Some aggressive posturing of Christian activists working in India has been recognized by the many mainline Christian Churches as well. The official voice of the Anglican Church, ACO, identifies Christian Evangelists as a major cause of communal disturbances and social disruption. *"However it is true there are problems within Christian Churches as well. The work of Mainline Churches in India is undermined by TV Evangelists who regularly attack other religions and display converts from Hinduism as a kind of trophy. There are 4 o 5 such cable channels in India running 24 hours a day-seeking to present many kinds of extremist material as the Christian message."* [LXXIV]

R.L. Francis, a Dalit (Outcaste) Christian and head of the Poor Christian Liberation Movement revealed that despite the Indian Church being the second largest employer after the Indian Government, a majority of poor Christians do not get jobs with the Church. Even Christian schools that enjoy minority privileges provided by the Indian Constitution do not educate India's Christian poor. R.L. Francis divulged that the Vatican appoints Bishops regardless of local considerations whereas in China it allows the local people to appoint their own Bishops.

"While undergoing conversion, weaker and deprived sections firmly believed that an organized world religion like Christianity would bring about revolutionary changes in their socio-economic conditions and living standards. But it remains a far cry as the Church leadership is interested only in furthering the program of conversion and not concerned about their social or economic well being, Church leadership is bothered only about the number of people who go for conversion and not about their pitiable conditions or social circumstances. The biggest proof of this was that a large chunk of foreign funds were being utilized either for Evangelism or for luxurious lifestyles of the people monopolizing Church leadership," said Francis. [LXXV]

R.L. Francis believes that the Vatican has one lone interest in India and that is conversion. He alleges that there is no interest in fixing the problem and insists that like all other Dalit Christians, *"I am subtly reminded to remember who I am-an untouchable."* He says letters sent to the

[LXXIII] **Author's Collection** of the Writings of David Sherman
[LXXIV] **Anglican Communion News Service**
www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2008/9/22/ACNS4524
[LXXV] http://dalitchristian.org

Vatican demanding help have been met with silence. *"But we will not be silent. The church leaders in India should stop asking the government to give us the status of the Scheduled Caste. When we embraced Christianity, we came to the Church for a better life. Now they cannot go back on it. They (The Vatican) have only set up a business enterprise here solely for promoting conversions and none for Dalit upliftment. We are asking the Vatican to stop all conversion in India for the next 100 years and spend the money on healing those who have already come to the faith."*[LXXVI]

As churchgoers dwindle in Europe—according to pollster Gallup International, attendance declined from 60-65% in 1980 to 20% in 2000—countries such as India with its enormous potential for conversion have become more important for the Vatican. But an old hierarchical civilization such as India poses unique challenges, explains R.L. Francis, president of the Poor Christian Liberation Movement. Here, *"the higher castes of Christianity, Syrians, Mangloreans and Goans from south India dominate churches in the country and treat Dalit converts like second-class citizens,"* he says.

Father William Premdass Chaudary, a Catholic Priest of Delhi Archdiocese spoke of his negative experiences as low caste Christian. *"Even myself, I have been treated like an insect. I am a local Christian yet I am not given any assignment by the bishop of the Delhi Archdiocese. It is because I am a Dalit and a local Priest."* According to his testimony, *"Three years ago when I began highlighting the plight of my community, my parish was taken from me. I became a nuisance to the Archbishop by raising issues faced by lower castes in Churches, so they sidelined me."* [LXXVII]

It is quite astonishing that rather than using their mass influence and funds to uplift their own followers, the Church is demanding that the Government officially recognize Christians as being members of the Caste system. Not only is this a direct violation of church doctrine, it is a cynical attempt to continue marketing Christian controlled schools and institutions to the wealthy and prosperous. Rather than uplifting their people from the shackles of poverty and castism, the Indian Church demands that the Government institutionalize their socially backward plight. In other words, instead of fulfilling the promise of equality offered by Christianity, which does not recognize caste, the Church seeks government compensation for its failure to deliver.

The Christian Church in India is a vast and profitable enterprise. Despite representing a mere approximate 3% of the population it owns 27% of the land. Much of this land is turned towards various money making ventures. At the same time foreign sources of funding continue to pour into Christian coffers. According to Orissa State Government records, a staggering amount of 4,215,585,000.00 INR (Indian Rupees) (approx. $100 million US dollars) of foreign funds went to

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[LXXVI] **Report by Rajdeep Datta Ray** livemint.com
[LXXVII] **An internal battle wages in the Church** http://dalitchristian.org/
http://www.livemint.com/2008/09/03001625/An-internal-battle-wages-in-th.html

such groups in the 4 year period spanning 1999-2003. It is important to take into account that money goes a lot further in India than in the West. The cost of overhead is extremely low in comparison to the West. This is especially true of Orissa, one of the least developed parts of India

The organizations that accounted for the lion share of these foreign funds are:

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Balasore: INR (Indian Rupees) 113,356,000

The Orissa Follow up Ministry: INR 23,037,000

The Ancient Pattern Pentecostal Church: INR 49,957,000

Amar Jyoti India: INR 21,991,000

The Cuttack Roman Catholic Church: INR 128,263,000

Vincentian Orissa Society: INR 114,738,000

Daughters of Charity of St Vincent Society: INR 114,738,000

Gram Vikas: INR 430,327,000

Roman Catholic Diocese of Berhampur: INR 85,533,000

East Indian Mission: INR 28,776,000

Joypore Evangelical Lutheran Church: INR 44,076,000

Catholic Diocese of Rourkela: INR 60,013,000

Society of the Divine Word: INR 72,404,000

Catholic Diocese of Sambalpur: INR 43,525,000

Faith Outreach: INR 81,392,000

Association of the Hand Maids of Mary: INR 28,882,000

Arnoldus Convent: INR 11,999,000

Hebron: INR 10,590,000

The Catholic Church of Orissa, alone, excluding its schools and hospitals, brought in INR 471,675,000 of foreign funds within the 4 year period of 1999-2003. Comparing the foreign funds pouring into one Indian State with a very minimal Christian population to the funds invested in

a typical US State with a large Christian population, we can only come to one conclusion. The funds are being used to convert Indians away from their native faiths. For if it were truly meant to tend to the needs of the flock, the money could just as well be sent to serve the needs of the American or European Christian communities. It is also significant to note that the foreign funds harnessed by the Catholic Diocese far outweigh the funds received by the Catholic hospitals and schools.

The vast and valuable real estate holdings of the Church are another legitimate concern to many Indians. As stated earlier, the 3% Indian Christians account for 27% of India's property. An Indian citizen feels that not only is this disproportionate, but to make matters worse, the Church lands are being misused and sold for the financial benefit of the few at the expense of the many. Dalit Christians have publicly urged the Indian Government to revoke the perpetual lease agreements it has with the Indian Church. In their view, the land was leased to the Church in recognition of its service to the underprivileged classes. Yet instead the underprivileged Indian Christians have been forgotten and ignored. The largesse of the government meant for the empowerment of the disempowered is being squandered by special interests.

Again we see a similar pattern in regards to Christian schools. While enjoying the Constitutional provisions provided for minority institutions, Christian schools cater to the upper and middle class sections of society. The Constitutional provisions are there for the explicit purpose of reversing the socially decayed conditions of India's poor. Tragically Christian schools do not allow the Christian poor to attend their schools. Nor do they employ many Dalit Christians in their campuses. Prof. Joseph Pulikunnel, a veteran Syrian Catholic social reformer, comments, *"There are about 300 Christian colleges in Kerala but you will not find any Dalit working there."*

Christian activist and editor of the Church magazine 'Church Restoration', P.B. Lomeo exposed the ongoing injustice of the Indian Church policies. *"The Second Vatican Assembly of the Roman Catholics held over 40 years ago had endorsed that all religions of the world are equal and largely advocate truth and holiness universally. Why, then, are the Pope and his representatives spending exorbitant funds to convert the entire Asian community to Christianity. The need of the hour is to invest on the welfare and upliftment of the weaker and deprived Dalit Christians and not on Evangelism. Not even one of India's 40,000 Christian Educational facilities admits children of Dalit Christians."*

This revelation banishes any doubts as to the conversionary agenda behind the Christian school system. As highlighted earlier, the Christian motivation for educating the Indian masses was blatantly trumpeted as a means to an end. That end, according to the Christians, was and is conversion. History and the testimonials of the Christians themselves verify this as a fact. The

agenda has remained the same yet the obvious Triumphalist attitudes have been subdued to a methodical whisper. The intention and agenda has however never been subverted.

When we recognize that the billions of dollars pouring into India allegedly on behalf of 3% of its people, yet a majority of these same people are denied services by the church, the evidence is clear. When we consider that the amount of money sent to India's Christians in comparison with the funds spent on the Christians in the West, the imbalance becomes obvious. Per capita India's Christians receive a stupendous amount of funds. However since the funding does not go to India's Christian poor, we can deduce that it is not meant for India's Christian masses. When the Christian children are not welcome in Christian schools its quite clear that these schools are meant for Christian conversion and pecuniary gain.

The sheer volume of foreign money is not the Church's sole source of financial support. The Church's vast land holdings, schools, hospitals, orphanages and other institutions represent billions of dollars worth of capital. This translates into a very mammon based system functioning throughout the thousands of Christian organizations in India. It is as if a Gold Rush is on. India is the setting and her people are the commodity.

The massive drive into Orissa is glorified on various Christian websites. One Protestant website lists hundreds of different Protestant groups active in Orissa along with the exact longitude-latitude with the postal codes of nearly every village in Orissa.[LXXVIII]

Being Protestants this list does not include Catholics or other nonaligned churches. Again we see a disproportionate representation of Church groups compared with followers. Such overkill can only represent an aggressive and predatory hunger for funds and new converts. In a self feeding mechanism, the funds go towards conversion and the conversions are used to attract and collect more funds. As with any investment a return is expected. Despite their claims, the return is not the blessings of the Heavenly Father but rather they are the much more profane empowerment of capital gains. In this case the converts are the return on the investment.

Reports have also been made that the Church is making money on the local level as well for the convert must donate to their Church. These 'donations' can be money but not in all cases. Generally, amongst the poor communities, money is a challenge. Therefore the converts are required to give rice, a percentage of their harvests, the first calf, lamb, goat, chickens, eggs etc. Thus the predatory circle is complete. Funds are given to make converts; converts are used to encourage more foreign funds and the converts themselves become a direct source of funds as well. For rice donated means church money not spent on rice. These poor converts, who are the direct impetus for foreign funds, receive very little, if any, of the benefits of these funds. Instead

[LXXVIII] **Orissa Villages** gospelgo.com/a/or.htm

they are required to add to the coffers of the church. Thus an enterprise based in faith in Christ becomes an exercise in corporate capitalism.

From within this context, the demands of the Poor Christian Liberation Movement (PCLM) are clearly a call for justice and integrity befitting true Disciples of the Christ. In a letter to the Pope, the World Council of Churches, the Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi the PCLM declared, *"We feel the time has come for Christians in India to suggest to their Christian brethren and sisters in the West that all efforts must be made to make the community self sufficient and not dependant. We, Christians of India wish that the foreign funds must be diverted to the poor people of Africa."*[LXXIX]

Yet the impact of the Missionaries upon Africa has been detrimental as well. J. C. Kumarappa (born Joseph Chelladurai Cornelius) was an Indian economist and a close associate of Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi. A pioneer of rural economic development theories, Kumarappa is credited for developing economic theories based upon Gandhism. He was also a leading figure in India's Freedom struggle. As an Indian Christian, he frequently attempted to appeal to the Christian values of the British rulers. Kumarappa repudiated the British missionary's use of Romans 13, '*give unto Caesar…*' as an argument against civil disobedience. J. C. Kumarappa stated that the missionaries seemed to be *"Britishers first and Christians afterwards if convenient."*[LXXX]

After India's independence, Kumarappa worked for the Planning Commission of India and the Indian National Congress to develop national policies for agriculture and rural development. His concerns for agricultural and rural development were beyond India alone. His global vision took into account the millions of African poor as well. He recognized the same problems that plagued India were impacting the African continent as well. J. C. Kumarappa stated, "*Before these Christian missionaries landed in Africa, the Africans had their land, but not the Bible. Now they have the Bible, and not their land.*

This quote is also attributed to Bishop Desmond Tutu *"When the missionaries came, they had the Bible and we had the land. They said, 'let us pray'. We closed our eyes. When we opened them we had the Bible and they had the land"* [LXXXI] The small district of Kandhamal is home to approximately 366 active Christian agencies all acting in like manner. Their work was in direct contrast to the efforts of native Oriyan social reformers such as Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati.

LXXIX **PCLM Resolution For National Convention** Friday 6th June 2008
LXXX **Christians in Secular India** pg 102 Abraham Vazhayil Thomas
LXXXI **Tutu, Desmond** www.brainyquotes.com

The Four Armed God of the West

"To the Indian Christian, Jesus was the white man's god marching with a sword in one hand and the Union Jack in the other." Oxford Lecture by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

J. C. Kumarappa identified the Western Missionaries as an integral part of the West's geo-political agenda. He referred to the four arms of the West. These four arms function in different capacities but their goals are the same. According to Kumarappa these four arms are the Army, Navy, Air Force and the Church. The history of the past 500 years proves this to be a fact. A loophole in current CIA regulations maintains this reality. It allows for the Intelligence agency to use Clergy, missionaries, journalists and Peace Corp workers as covert operatives.[LXXXII]

The CIA's stated policy of using missionaries highlights the reality of foreign governments' potential to operate clandestinely under guise of religion. The exact wording in the clause is, "*Unique and special threats to National Security*." In other words the decision for the deployment of an operative and their actions are based upon the decision making processes of a foreign power disconnected from eh mandate of the Indian people.

There are numerous examples of missionaries engaged in espionage throughout history. A brief investigation into the issue verifies this historical fact. During my fact finding mission to Orissa, the name of World Vision came up repeatedly. This NGO is active throughout India and the world. The US Government's USAID (US Agency for International Development) has been the largest contributor to World Vision over the years. While World Vision is officially a non-governmental organization or NGO it has been suspected of being an agent of the US Government. World Vision identifies itself as the largest "international Christian relief and development agency" active in the third world. It is officially a united effort composed of the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches. However according the an American Catholic human rights group, Pax Christi, World Vision functions as "*Trojan Horse for US Policy*."[LXXXIII] The fact that there has long been a deep mistrust of foreign funded Church groups is therefore not a very startling revelation.

Indian Scholar and Researcher Pramod Gupta observed, *"Several Western Diplomats and analysts including an Ex CIA Chief have written books revealing their strategic design of destroying Indian culture and strength by conversion programs undertaken by Christian Missionaries at their behest through resources and budgets made available by them. The British Parliament has passed Resolutions in the past condemning the US Government and their organs for supporting such programs."*

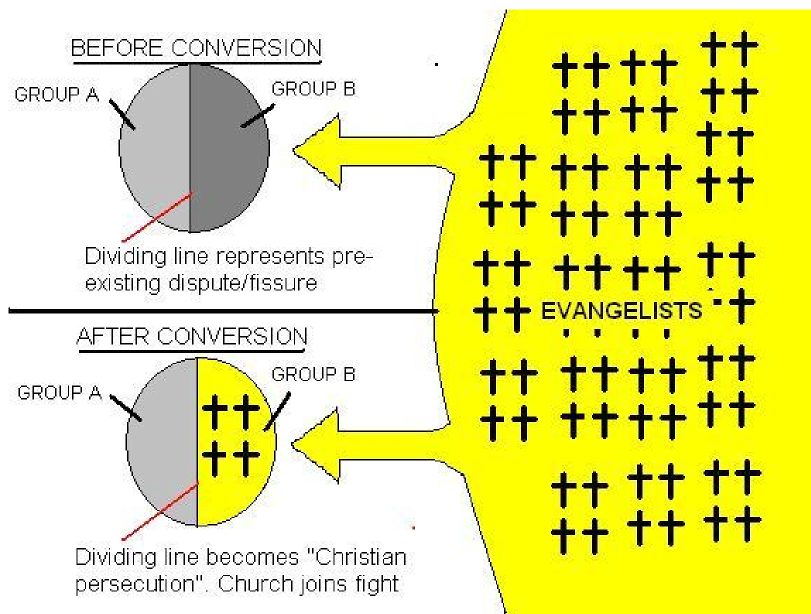
LXXXII **CIA recruitment and the church** The Christian Century Mar 13, 1996
LXXXIII **George Bush: The Unauthorized Biography** Ch XVII Webster G. Tarpley & Anton Chaitkin

Rather than being a rare occurrence, the entire history of Missionary activities in the Far East is rooted in espionage. The first European Christian missionaries active beyond West Asia were sent out by the Pope Innocent IV after the Council of Lyons in 1245 CE. They were spies commissioned to gather information about the strength and resources of the Mongols who had swept over West Asia. The sudden rise of the Mongolian Empire posed a serious threat to Christendom in Europe. A second mission was commissioned by the Pope and John de Monte Carvino was sent to visit the court of Kublai Khan in Beijing for the same purpose. He smuggled Christianity into China surreptitiously by buying slaves and baptizing them and building a few churches. The Pope in Rome was pleased by these efforts and saw that Christianity was thus expanding in China.[LXXXIV]

A graphic has been created by Dr. Shiv, an astute observer from the Indian Military Consortium's Bharat Rakshak forum regarding the Kandhamal conundrum. In it he clearly delineates the role of the Church in not only magnifying underlying social tensions but its ability to completely change the entire dynamics of the situation.

"I have created a graphic to show how evangelists use existing disputes in society to create turmoil and widen the fight and make it a transnational religious war. Imagine two groups in society who have a dispute. The graphic shows two groups "Group A" and "Group B" and the dividing line between those two groups represents the dispute. Now the Evangelists converts group B to Christianity.
The dividing line - the old dispute now becomes a line of Christian persecution at which "Christians are being persecuted". It becomes religious war in which the Church will use the sympathy and resources of the Church to hound and intimidate Group "A" who suddenly find themselves "persecutors of Christians." Anyone who supports group A against group B will be Right Wing fundamentalists who are fighting a bigoted battle against a minority group. The Church and evangelists have refined this system over centuries and it has been done time and time and time again for 2000 years. It is a system of offering allies, funds and forces in a dispute in exchange for conversion and allegiance to Christianity. Saving souls my foot. The "soul" business is just a fig leaf for the political defeat of a resisting society.

LXXXIV **Asia and Western Dominance** p. 15. K.M. Panikkar 1953



It is also appropriate to assume that some changes happen within group A in the image while the group B is converted. As an example, prior to the conversion of group B, group A is 10% right wing and 90% liberals and after the conversion of group B, group A becomes 60% right wing and 40% liberals. Currently from the image, group A appears unaffected in response to external changes around them. Hopefully someday this could culminate in some mathematical modeling of the impact of conversion upon social demographics."[LXXXV]

Fear mongering is yet another tactic employed by some Christian groups active in India. Vast sums based on individual donations are harnessed by cultivating the fears and sympathies of Christians. A manifest example of this can be seen on various US based Church websites. North Dallas Church of God is a perfect example of fear mongering in the name of Jesus but for all intents and purposes it is all about the money.

[LXXXV] **Bharat Rakshak Consortium of Indian Defence Websites** '*The Kandhamal issue'* October 5, 2008 http://forums.bharat-rakshak.com/viewtopic.php?f=16&t=4364&start=0&st=0&sk=t&sd=a

"BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!!!The doors of evangelizing India are closing faster than we think with the BJP in power. Little religious freedom exits now just because the government in the center is a coalition government. But once the BJP attains an absolute majority in India, the doors of all Christian works will be closed for good. We are standing at a junction, where we still have time to act. Phulbani Church is one of the bright spots in the history of North Dallas Church of God's 15 years of history. It was a work initiated by the request of North Dallas Church of God's Missions Department during the year 1997. God is blessing this work and now Phublani is the anchor point of the evangelization around that area. Since it is the headquarters of the District (County here) the price for building and property is higher than other remote areas.[LXXXVI]

The above quote from the North Dallas Church of God clearly identifies their aim of using Phulbani, the capital of Kandhamal district, for the '*Evangelization around the area.*' The clear yet unspoken reference is that the people of Kandhamal are in darkness and lack true spirituality and religion; thus the need to evangelize.

Despite the fact that the BJP Government had been in control of the Central Government for 6 years, hosted the Pope, (India under the BJP was the only country in South Asia to allow the Pope to visit. Sri Lanka denied permission for the visit) the Church leaders abuse the goodwill of their patrons. The effort to paint the BJP as a fascist anti-Christian party has its uses as a fund raising and vote gaining tool; thus the propaganda and misinformation campaign. Such efforts not only serve to highlight the deceitfulness of these Christian activists but it is also a display of their complete disregard for the truth in history. In actuality, it was not the BJP that established the anti-conversion laws in Orissa it was its arch-rival the Indian National Congress Party.

After the brutal assassination of Swami Lakshmananda, an editorial by the Pioneer daily news highlighted the facts in this regard.

"Orissa has long suffered on account of Christian missionaries 'harvesting the souls' of impoverished and un-educated tribals by exploiting their vulnerability and innocence…The report of Niyogi commission, which was set up to look into the activities of Christian missionaries and the methods adopted by them, was an indictment of both authority, which was found wanting in preventing rice bowl conversions, and the church as an institution. ***Subsequently, Orissa became the first State to adopt a law against forcible or surreptitious conversion; at that time, the Congress ruled the State and Mrs. Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister-she took a pro-active interest in the enactment of the law****. Yet, despite the legal restrictions, Christian missionaries continue to flock to poverty-hut areas of Orissa (as well as other States) to convert tribals and Dalits (Untouchables) through inducement and other equally objectionable means. The resultant social conflict is only to be expected. Neither*

[LXXXVI] **North Dallas Church of God** Missions Project Phulbani-Orissa http://www.youthfocus.net/ndcg/missions-project.pdf

secularism nor tolerance means a society should ignore the illicit 'harvesting of souls'. The tragic death of Graham Staines and his two sons could have been avoided had authority been more alert; last year's violence in Phulbani and other areas of Kandhamal district could have been prevented if the law had been implemented in both letter and spirit; and, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati would not have been brutally murdered had authority not been so lax, especially since the police were aware of the threat to his life."[LXXXVII]

Disregarding the fact that it was the Congress Party that instituted India's anti-conversion legislation, a new mythology has been fashioned. It falsely avers that such laws originated from the 'bigoted' endeavors of the BJP. Ironically, Congress has abandoned its past commitment to Indian culture while it is the BJP that has inherited the mantle of the leadership of Nehru, Indira and Gandhi.

One can find countless examples of the ongoing conversionists drive in Orissa. World Encounter in association with the Orissa Evangelical Fellowship states on their website that they are inviting other Christian congregations to *"share the Good News with the unreached people of India."* and *"They are committed to reaching their Hindu neighbors and families with the Good News that has transformed their lives." "…The heart of the OEF vision is focused on Church planting, discipleship and leadership development."* Clearly this is about Conversion and Conversion alone. Not once do they mention ministering to the Christians of India. Church planting and Discipleship can only happen through conversion. This kind of sharing the 'Good News' is bad news for India. This phrase is the fallback term employed by dishonest Christian fundamentalists who attempt to hide the reality of their actions. These actions are a direct and deliberate attack on the mores and traditions of Native culture. They profess that all Hindus are in darkness and that only the Christians are in the light. They claim a monopoly on God and believe that only they have THE key to Heaven. They are not claiming to represent a path. They claim that they represent THE ONLY PATH. Thus every act of 'sharing the Good News' becomes a hostile act. It is for all intents and purposes a form of cultural genocide.

When a Hindu converts to Christianity he/she must abandon and reject all Hindu Gods, Goddesses and beliefs in order to become a Christian. When a Christian becomes a Hindu, Jesus and his teachings remain a welcome part of their spirituality. On one hand we see a sterilization process and a cultural homogenization and on the other hand we see a texturization and an enhanced experience. In the name of enlightenment and religion we see a cultural chasm being created. With military precision and aggressive posturing, Christians have targeted India in a big way.

LXXXVII **Pioneer News Service** 'Conversion Conflict' August 26, 2008

Some years back, journalist John Stock, the New Delhi correspondent for the British paper the Daily Telegraph wrote in this regard. He clarifies that the communal tension in India is a direct reaction to the blatant assault upon Hinduism. Writing in The Spectator, Mr. Stock says: *"There is little doubt that the current communal tension in India would not be serious if foreign-funded missionaries had been content with giving Indians the choice of Christianity and left it at that. Put simply, the Indian subcontinent has become the principal target for a wide range of western Christian missions which are determined to spread the gospel to India's 'unreached' people….hundreds of thousands of dollars are being channeled into India through well-organized, America-based evangelical missions, the meticulously researched ethnographic data they are compiling on the region ensuring that funds are being directed with military precision to the right area, even to specific pin codes in remote tribal districts."*

Mr. Stock quoted a statement from a Colorado-based Group of World- wide Christian Missions calling itself '*AD 2000 and Beyond*' as saying: *"Flashes of light' seen all around the North India-Hindu belt, particularly among the tribal groups, are encouraging us to believe that the Sum of Righteousness is indeed ready to rise upon these unreached peoples."*[LXXXVIII]

An example of this is also found in the words of Pastor Brain Zahnd of Word of Life Church, St Joseph, Missouri, USA. *"P.G. Vargis, the founder of Indian Evangelical Team (IET) and I felt it was time for a breakthrough in Orissa, and as the site of several martyrdoms, Semiliguda was a spiritually significant location to hold the conference." "…Even the name of the conference -- Orissa Peace Festival -- was a deliberate euphemism so as not to evoke hostility." "…Thank you, Jesus, for a great victory in Orissa!"*[LXXXIX]

We find this kind of subterfuge mentality and modus operendi going back to the time of the early British East India Company's ban on Christian Missionaries (1765-1813). Christian preachers surreptitiously contrived the ban. Bangladeshi scholar Sufia M Uddin writes, *"A change in British East India Company's policy opened India to Missionaries. This was called the "pious clause." Charles Grant (1746–1823), a former company employee in India and a director, and other evangelical Christians, lobbied for this provision.* ***Previously, missionaries could not legally operate within company territory, although several did, including the pioneer Baptist missionary William Carey, by pursuing a trade or profession as a cover.*** *The company was also required to spend money for the material and moral improvement of India. As a result of the "pious clause," India*

LXXXVIII **Mission Impossible: Putting an End to Conversion Activity** M.V. Kamath October 13, 1999
LXXXIX **Brain Zahnd Family Website** Orissa Report
http://www.brianzahnd.net/index.php?app=blog&p=12

became a major field of missionary endeavor. Missions established schools, hospitals, and clinics as well as churches. Company officials who were staunch Christians often worked closely with the missionaries."[XC]

From this we can deduce that even the earliest phases of missionary activity in India perfected the art of conversion regardless of the law of the land. In fact it would not be wrong to say that preaching regardless of the law became a tradition amongst missionaries active in India. Jacketing themselves in the mantle of the persecuted Christ they saw legal hurdles as a burden to be borne in their efforts to witness Christ amongst the masses. To them, retribution and martyrdom still carries sacredness similar to the crown of thorns and cross that Jesus bore. A majority of these individuals were wracked with prejudiced and jaundiced views towards those of other faiths. Jesus Christ, himself however, admonishes such people when he said, *"Healer, heal thyself."* [XCI] And *"You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of the eye of your brother..."*[XCII]

P.C.Dogra Indian Police Service (Retd) President of the Forum on Integrated National Security revealed that, *"As per the annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs under the head "Receipt of Foreign Contributions by Voluntary Associations", most of the donations go toward relief work, rural development, medicine and education. Maintenance of priests/preachers /other religious functionaries are the 15th on the list of purposes, receiving $21 million of all foreign funding. Of the fifteen top donor agencies given in the report, eight are Christian, seven are secular and none are Hindu".*

The Church funds pouring into India appear to be at the expense of Church and Christians in the West. The field of historical research owes a great debt to the various dedicated individuals in the field of archeology and others dedicated to the recovery of history. Almost forgotten today, St Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine of Rome, was one of history's greatest such individuals. It was through her faith, perseverance and commitment that today's Christians can worship at the holiest sites in all of Christendom. A prolific researcher, excavator and archeologist with absolute faith in the Divinity of Christ she personally rediscovered the sites of the crucifixion, resurrection and amazingly recovered the very cross upon which Jesus Christ had borne and been crucified upon. Regardless of the doubts some may have about her discoveries, none can doubt that her efforts contributed to the very foundation of the Christian religion, culture and civilization. It is no accident that it was her son, Emperor Constantine who made Christianity the State religion of the Roman Empire. St Helena is therefore one of the most influential people in the history of the world. Her ability to track down the smallest clues such as the sweet smelling basil like plants that grew on Golgotha hill, were key to her success.

[XC] **Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation** Sufia M. Uddin 2006
[XCI] **The Holy Bible** Luke 4.23
[XCII] **Ibid.** Matthew 7.5

It was the presence of this plant that gave her the important clue that led to the discovery of the holy site.

"The story is often told how Saint Helena had arrived in Jerusalem on her pilgrimage in search of The True Cross. She believed that God had told her that she would eventually find this most holy of relics and restore it as a symbol of Christian worship. Helena had been searching for many days before she noticed a sweet-smelling plant growing on a barren hill outside Jerusalem. Immediately, she gave instructions to dig under the plant, where she discovered the cross on which Jesus had been crucified."[XCIII]

This aromatic herb, basil (Ocimum basilicum) has long been associated with the Holy Cross. Etymologically, it is related to basileios, the Greek word for king. According to a pious legend, the Empress Saint Helena found the location of the True Cross by digging for it under a colony of basil. Basil plants were reputed to have sprung up at the foot of the Cross where fell the Precious Blood of Christ and the tears of the Mother of Sorrows. A sprig of basil was said to have been found growing from the wood of the True Cross. Also, from the practice in some areas of strewing branches of basil before church communion rails, it came to be known as Holy Communion Plant.[XCIV]

St Helena had workmen explore in that area, looking for the true cross. They found a piece of wood that had the plant, sweet basil growing from it. St. Helena had people who were ill touch the wood. They were healed. After several miracles had occurred, St.Helena had a church built there. The Church is called, The Church of the Holy Sepulcher.[XCV] "One plant legend of special relevance to Christ's Cross is that of the herb, basil (Ocimum basilicum) which was held to be of such close association with the Cross that St. Helena was able to find the location of the True Cross by digging for it under a colony of basil plants.[XCVI]

"St. Helena now was 80 years old. In spite of her advanced years, she strongly sensed the need to fulfill a life-long dream. She requested that her son assign to her a detachment, to travel to Jerusalem to search and find the Holy Cross, upon which the Lord was crucified. The Cross had been buried over the 300 years of the Christian persecutions. In 326 she arrives in Jerusalem, but the whole face of the City was changed after the destruction of the Holy City by the Roman Emperor Titus in the year 70 A.D. The pagans sought to build temples of their gods over the sites, which had become holy by the first Christians --- the sites sanctified by the Lord's life, upon which the first Christians used to gather to venerate and praise the Lord. Where was St. Helena to commence the excavations? From afar she saw a most beautiful temple built in honor of the ancient goddess Aphrodite. She was so impressed by its beauty that she wanted to see it up close. As she approached, she was almost overcome by the strong fragrance of large

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XCIII **The Story of Saint Helena** The Order of Saint Helena http://www.osh.org/st_helena.html
XCIV **Blessing Basil Leaf in Honour of the Holy Cross** Father Mark Vultus Christi
XCV **Exalting the True Cross** http://www.antiochian.org/assets/asset_manager/726.pdf
XCVI **Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross** Donna Marie

sweet basil plants, growing profusely near one corner of the temple. She sensed deeply, that this was the hand of Divine Providence guiding her. "This is where we must make our initial excavation" she commanded. It wasn't long before three crosses were unearthed. Two in the form of the letter "T", and one with an extended piece on the vertical arm. This was extended by the crucifiers to further mock the Lord, having nailed the inscription in Greek, Hebrew and Latin: "Jesus, the Nazarene, King of the Judeans" There was no question, which was the true Cross of our Lord."[XCVII]

Interestingly this same Basil (Ocimum basilicum) is the most sacred plant in Hinduism and is known as Tulsi. According to scientists it has its origins in India. The obvious significance of this sacred plant to both Christianity and Hinduism is a very interesting commonality between the two faiths. During my research into the story of St Helena, the Holy Basil plant's significance to two of the world's great religions, I discovered the Order of St Helena (OSH). The Order of St Helena is a Catholic group dedicated to the memory, teachings and life of St Helena, Discoverer and Archeologist extraordinaire. Yet all is not well with the Order of St Helena.

"For several years now we have been facing an increasingly serious budget deficit, and we have also to realize that our shortage of 'Sister power' is draining us of the energy we need to do ministry, both to the Church and to our own sisters, some of whom are aging and in the need of special assistance. At the 62nd Annual Chapter of the Order of St Helena Sunday, August 10, 2008 the Sisters took an enormous leap of faith. Due to increasingly overstretched resources, both in terms of finances and a shortage of Sisters, we agreed to close both our New York convents and move temporarily to our Augusta, Georgia convent with the intent of looking for a new piece of property in a diocese and location as yet unknown on which to build a new convent. Our intention for the Vail's Gate property is to explore ways in which we can realize appropriate income from the property but also to attempt to preserve the land from development."[XCVIII]

This is not an isolated case. Churches across the Western world are struggling financially. As an example, St. Peter's Catholic Church of Columbia, South Carolina lists a meager annual budget yet is still funding a new school at their Mission of Kesamudram, India.[XCIX]

A recent statement released by the *'Center for Baptist Studies'* considered the savings of US $1,860 of an American Baptist church to be an 'AMAZING DEVELOPMENT'. *"Because of the good work of Robert Bridgeman and Rodney Goff and the Church Budget Committee for 2006, we have an AMAZING DEVELOPMENT! The final amount of our church budget for 2006 is LESS than our revised 2005 budget!! The amount of the 2006 church budget is $714,720! Our revised church budget for*

[XCVII] **The Greek Orthodox Mission Church of Greater Ocala** Fr. George Papadeas
[XCVIII] **Order of St Helena OSH** Press Release, October 3, 2008 http://www.osh.org/
[XCIX] **St. Peter's Church Money Matters** http://www.futrtech.com/stpeters/money.htm

2005 was $716,580. That means that we will DECREASE our church budget for the next year by a dollar amount of $1,860. While our church budget is conservative for 2006, it also represents raises for our ministers and staff!!! From our 2006 budget $71,473 will go to "Missions." Our church gives to ministries outside itself in this local church; that is the way it ought to be. We ought to give beyond ourselves as a church, just as we give beyond ourselves as individuals and families. Our church tithes outside itself!"[C]

These are just some examples of the drastic financial crunch being experienced by the Church in the West. The fact is, this is a pandemic problem impacting thousands of Churches. Budgets are being slashed and Churches make headlines for their new frugality. According to a Wall Street Journal report from 2005, the budget of US Catholic Church parishes amounted to $6.6 billion in the year 2000, the most recent year with the available figures.[CI] When comparing the per capita budget of Indian Catholic Churches with the Indian Catholic population one finds a ratio unreflective of the actual needs of the Church and its community. The obvious conclusion is that the funds are primarily meant for the conversion of the Hindus.

A revealing Tamil language pamphlet by the Ministry Gospel Rites Professional Forum of Simmakal, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India illustrates the problems within the Christian fold and acts as a guide towards clandestine conversionary tactics.

"Following are the directions given in the chapter *"Precautions to be taken while effecting conversion". No documents either for conversion or baptism should be given to the converts. No recording in any register is to be made. Visual testimonies like photographs, videos, etc. should be completely avoided. On no account, the people converted should adopt new Christian names. Each church should get to know themselves voluntarily the personal details of the people being converted, to avert the possibility of RSS or VHP activists being converted. The reason for this is the fear that these RSS/VHP activists would, before conversion, pretend and say that the conversion is free from coercion, but subsequently after conversion will complain that they were converted by coercion and were tempted with cash. This will lead to litigation. An easy method to convert either an individual or a group or family, is to take them to the nearby State, like Pondicherry, Kerala, Karnataka or Andhra Pradesh and effect the conversion there. Since there is no Anti-conversion Law in these States, no case can be booked against them in Tamil Nadu."*[CII]

These kind of aggressive and manipulative tactics are contributing greatly to the ill feeling and consternation in India. It is not Hindus alone that are disturbed by the blatant hostility exhibited

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[C] **Amazing Development** 'Church Budget'
http://www.centerforbaptiststudies.org/localchurch/fbcmaconbudget.doc.
[CI] **Wall Street Journal**
[CII] **Approach to combat Anti Conversion Law** published by Minority Gospel Rights Protection Forum in Simmakkal, Madurai, Tamilnadu

by some Christians. Many Indian Christians have issued calls for a rethink of Christian methodologies. Pastor Enoch Era of Hyderabad's Aradhana Christian Fellowship has urged the Indian Church to begin a serious introspection of itself and the way it has adopted the Missiological methods and strategies of the West.

Recognizing the negative image created by foreign funds, Pastor Enoch Era writes, *"Most Ministries in India today depend on foreign funds from abroad. This in itself has generated fears of Western Imperialism invading India through the Church. A rethink is very badly needed about such ministry… There is an urgent need to examine if the charges leveled against us are genuine – the charges of forced conversions, mass conversions, and conversions are causing cultural divide, inducements offered to converts, and that church is anti-national etc. There is need for clearer definition of what conversion is. Does it mean breaking of all ties with one's family? Does it mean changing one's name and adopting western or Hebrew/Greek (biblical) name, as is the practice among most Christians in India? Does it mean adopting western life-style etc? A rethink and a redefinition of the mission and priorities of the church – is it to fill the church with more and more members, so that 'my church' is the fastest growing one in town? What are the mission and the priority of the church? …In the name of fulfilling the great commission, we have conducted evangelistic campaigns and crusades on a mass scale as we approached the end of the second millennium. It is my sincere prayer and hope that we have not over done it, like an earlier generation of over-enthusiastic Christians lead a different kind of 'crusades' as they came to the end of the first millennium AD and ended up antagonizing the Islamic world. How much damage a misplaced interpretation and misplaced enthusiasm can do? History is witness to it – and we do well to learn from it. If we do not, a future generation will surely reap the consequences of our folly.* [CIII]

Aislee Jackson, an Anglo-Indian son of an English father and an Indian Mother is a practicing Catholic and an English teacher in New Delhi, India. He spent 20 years living in Canada and USA. At one point he was a dedicated social worker serving under the Archdiocese of Delhi. After sometime he became disillusioned with the experience. Despite the vast sums available to the Diocese he noted that a majority of funds did not go towards serving the Indian Catholic community. *"I became disenchanted with the whole affair. Here our people were, struggling and desperate. Instead of helping them, the Church is spending most of its time and money on the Hindus! It was obvious that they were using all the funds to try and convert the poor buggers! That's all the Diocese seemed to care about. So I got disgusted with it all and quit. Don't get me wrong. I'm still a Catholic but I don't have to go to Church to pray. God is everywhere and I can reach Jesus anywhere."*[CIV]

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the founder of the Art of Living Foundation, visited Orissa during the midst of the violence. In media interviews he spoke of a *'sustainable vision'* that would involve

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[CIII] **Response to the Incidents of Violence Against Christians** Pastor Enoch Era Hyderbad's Aradhana Christian Fellowship *http://streetsofgold.multiply.com/journal/item/182*
[CIV] **Author Interview with Aislee Jackson** New Delhi, India November 7,2008

'inter-faith dialogue comprising religious leaders from all communities.' Directly addressing the conversion issue he said that voluntary adoption of any religion should not be banned, but it should not be allowed if poor people are told that their ancestral religion is *'evil or bad'* or their faith is *'inferior'*. *"Conversion has created so many problems. It has even divided brothers and sisters in a family."* Sri Sri Ravi Shankar also questioned the Indian Government's declaration to give out College scholarships based on the religious identity of the students. *"Grants for minority institutions are understandable, but there should not be any politics in the classroom. Rather, economically challenged students of all backgrounds should qualify regardless of their religious identity. Doing otherwise would create tension and resentments amongst the students. The system of providing scholarship could have best been done by adopting economic criteria of all communities as a parameter, but religion-based scholarship would certainly generate religious disparities among students. This directly ties into the conversion issue because it gives people an incentive to convert to Christianity solely based on economic considerations. People must be free to practice their religion but the evil intentions behind forcible conversions must be condemned. As Mahatma Gandhi stated, conversion in the name of development and evangelism based on the denigration of the Hindu faith must be dealt with firmly."*[CV]

Mahatma Gandhi, recognized as the Father of Modern India, was quite clear regarding the impact of Christian Missionaries. His words are a clear warning and ironically in complete synchronicity with the views of the VHP and other Hindu organizations. Gandhi identified Christian conversion as hostile to the survival of Hindu religion. He identified conversion in the name of economic development as an inimical and cynical assault on the fabric of society that must be recognized for what it is. In a conversation with a Christian friend Gandhi stated, *"The first distinction I would make between your missionary work and mine is that while I am strengthening the faith of my people, you missionaries are undermining it."*[CVI]

Gandhi also wrote, *"My fear is that though Christian friends nowadays do not say it or admit that (they believe) the Hindu religion is untrue, they must harbor in their breast that the Hinduism is an error and that Christianity, as they believe it, is the only true religion. So far as I can understand the present Christian effort, it is to uproot Hinduism from her very foundation and replace it by another faith."* [CVII] Contrasting modern Christianity with the nature of Jesus Christ, Gandhi stated, *"If Jesus came to Earth again he would disown many things that are being done in his name. It is not he who merely says 'Lord' that is a Christian but it is he who doeth the will of the Lord."*[CVIII]

[CV] **Express News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 21, 2008 **Pioneer News Service** September 22, 2008
[CVI] **Young India** November 8, 1927
[CVII] **Harijan Magazine** M. Gandhi March 13, 1937
[CVIII] **Christian Missions** pg 165 Navajivan Press 1935

India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, in his circular letter to the Chief Ministers of the Indian States dated 17 October 1952 stated, *"We permit, by our Constitution, not only freedom of conscience and belief but also proselytism. Personally I do not like proselytism and it is rather opposed to the old Indian outlook which is, in this matter, one of live and let live. But I do not want to come in other people's ways provided they are not objectionable in some other sense. In particular, I would welcome any form of real social service by anyone, missionary or not. A question arises, however, how far we should encourage foreigners to come here for purely evangelical work. Often these foreign countries raise funds on the plea of converting the savage heathens. I do not want anyone to come here who looks upon me as a savage heathen, not that I mind being called a heathen or a pagan by anybody. But I do not want any foreigner to come who looks down upon us or who speaks about us in their own countries in terms of contempt. But if any foreigner wants to come here for social service, I would welcome him."*[CIX]

The implications of aggressive Christian fundamentalist conversion efforts upon the stability of a society have been recognized by many leading minds of history from not only India but elsewhere as well.

"Were the Pope or his allies, to send in mission to us some thousands of Jesuit priests to convert us to their orthodoxy, I suspect that we should deem and treat it as a National aggression on our peace and faith."

Are these the words of a Hindu fundamentalist xenophobe designed to disrupt communal harmony or hate speech of a dangerous radical or religious fanatic aiming to destroy the secular fabric of a Nation? In fact the author of these words has been identified as a radical, a radical revolutionary as a matter of fact. For these are the words of Thomas Jefferson, an American patriot, founding father and the 3rd President of the United States of America. He is also the celebrated author of the greatest declaration of human rights, secular ideals and good governance, the US Constitution.

Indigenous Natives or Disingenuous Migrants

"While the district is predominantly tribal, it is represented by SC Pana representatives both in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) and the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament). The Christian Pana representatives from this region in the state assembly have been indulging in appeasement politics. This cost Phulbani MLA and then Steel and Mines Minister Padmanabh Behera, a non-Christian Pana, his ministerial berth for allegedly doling out fake SC certificates to converts. In fact, patronage to the dalits in Kandhamal is not restricted to Behera. The seeds of

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CIX **Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru** Second Series, Volume 18, New Delhi, 1996 pp. 733-34

discontent were sown as early as 1981 when the then Congress government recommended that the Union government list Kui-speaking Dalit Christian Panas as tribals. The Rajya Sabha MP from Congress Dr RK Nayak has always found himself embroiled in controversies over the SC-ST conflict."

It is important to frame the discussion of the Pana track record in the proper light. There are many quotes and historical records that portray the Pana in a very negative manner. Obviously it is unjust and inaccurate to paint an entire people with merely one stroke. Despite the many unflattering references to the Pana people, it is improper to label their entire community as criminal by nature. This is exactly what the British and some Indian rulers did. The fact is much crime is committed out of desperation. In an uncompromising world the Pana's survival instincts drove them towards struggle and at times criminality. I have highlighted the many references that clearly present the Pana as criminals and ruthless instigators of mayhem. I have done this, not because I agree that the Panas are criminal by nature but rather the Pana have been labeled as criminal by design. It is in order to highlight the fact that throughout much of their known history, the Pana people have been looked upon with suspicion and mistrust. Right or wrong, their reputation and the stigma associated with them cannot be denied.

In my personal opinion, if the Vedic Varna system had not degenerated into the modern caste system, people such as the Pana would not have been forced towards criminality nor conversion. Thus today India is reaping the wild winds and storms from the seeds of these past injustices and the crimes of the Christian converted Pana have become a major challenge for the Nation. It is quite clear that the conversion of many Pana to Christianity has sharpened the discord between the Kandha and the Pana communities. The image of competing religions at war, however, is not accurate. The evidence shows that the troubles are directly related to issues regarding land and resources. The Christianization of the Pana has merely served to intensify the differences between the two peoples and has given the Christian Pana strong impetus towards political domination of the region. In other words, if conversion were not involved the two parties would find a smoother path towards communal harmony.

As highlighted earlier, Kandha legend claims the Panas were a criminal class that had been exiled by the King of Ghumusar. The Christian Panas and their supporters vigorously deny this view. According to the Christian Pana and the Indian media, the Pana have just as much claim to the region of Kandhamal as the Kandhas. The Kandhas

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[CX] **Author Interview with Prof A.C. Sahu North Orissa University Tribal Studies program** September 20th, 2008
[CXI] **Ethnographic and Folk Culture Society** 1947
[CXII] **Underdevelopment and Destitution: Essays on Orissa Society** Jagannath Pathy

are just as adamantly set against this idea and hold that the Panas arrived as recently as 200 years ago. Anthropologists, historians and the British records provide us with many clues in regards to this controversy.

Professor of North Orissa University (NOU) Tribal Studies program Dr Sahu refers to the Panas as a migratory group, *"The Panas migrated from different places. They were not the original people of the Kandhamal lands. They migrated to the Kandhamal area. By being in close proximity with Kandhas they adopted the Kui language. Now the Panas are claiming that they are not only native Kui Speakers but that they have always spoken Kui and nothing else. However there is no historical or anthropological evidence for this view. The authorities have verified several times that the Panas have no rightful claim to the Kui identity. As an anthropologist, studying the tribals for many years, I can concur that the Panas are not a tribal group and that Kui has always been the native language of the Kandha tribals and no one else."*[CX]

There is much evidence confirming the Panas as a recent migratory group to Kandhamal. In the 1947 publication *'Ethnographic and Folk Culture Society'* it is written, *"Meanwhile about 150 years ago the Pana, a scheduled caste of the plains were driven away by the rulers as thieves, settled inside the Kandhamal settlements and acted as mediators between the Kandhas and the Oriya immigrants. But they were always treated as social outcasts."*[CXI]

We also find reference to the Panas as exiled migrants from the plains in the work entitled *'Underdevelopment and Destitution: essays on Orissan Society' by Jagannath Pathy. He writes, "Following this about 150 years, the Panas- a scheduled caste of the plains-were exiled by the rulers for theft and they settled in Kandhamal."*[CXII]

There are numerous scholarly references verifying the migratory status of the Panas. Dr. Sukant Kumar Chaudary states, *"The Neighboring Panas, a scheduled caste community, inhabit almost all Kandha villages. Their origin is traced to the plains of Orissa."*[CXIII] The 1976 publication *'Man in India'* mentions the Panas as migrants as well. *"…growth of the local population and decrease in the fertility of the land due to the frequent shifts and the migrations of the Panas."* The same book reveals that the Panas were migrating as recently as the 1920s. *"The first Pana migrated to Kandhguda hamlet sometime in the 1920s from Subaragiri, an Oriya settlement…"*[CXIV]

[CXIII] **Myopic Development Cultural lens: An Evaluate Study of Tribals** Dr. Sukant Kumar Chaudary
[CXIV] **Man In India** Sarat Chandra Roy

The Kandha appear to have never trusted the Pana migrants. Professor P. K. Jena's *'Orissa: A New Province 1938-48'* states, *"Traditionally, the Panas, a sharp minded migrant Dalit caste, were hated and treated by the Kandhas as "untouchables."*[CXV]

From the memories of John Campell, published in 1864, we have another reference that clearly refers to the Panas as migrants from the plains of Orissa. According to him the main link between the two groups was the trade in human sacrificial victims and household items and goods unavailable to the tribals. In exchange the Kandhas would barter animals, traditional artifacts, forest goods and parts of their harvest.[CXVI]

From these many references and expert opinions we can infer that rather than a mere Kandha legend, the Panas are in fact recent migrants into Kandhamal. Their identity as a migrant group from the plains of Orissa is a verifiable and historical fact.

Journalist Basudev Mahapatra writes about the socio-economic factors behind the Kandhamal conflagration.

"Conflict between the Panas and Kandhas of Kandhamal district became strong with increasing socio – economic gap between the communities. The Pana community of which majority have been converted to Christianity are educationally and economically much ahead of the Kandhas because of their church and missionary link. As per social activist and analyst Panchanan Mishra who heads an NGO that works for the development of tribals and people living in hilly regions, 'the Christian community members are provided with all kinds of support by the church itself or other organization having a church link or back up in time of emergency. Whereas, the Kandh tribals, who hate changing their religion, are not getting any immediate support from either their community nor from the government machinery. In such times, they come across the realities of government's high sounding tribal development policies which make them envious of the other community that is supported by the community and church as well. As per a senior journalist Ashok Parida, 'in case of emergencies like epidemics or health hazards, the nuns or health workers from churches attend the Christian patients and their families only and do not attend to the tribal patient living next door. The tribal patient is forced to wait till a government aid reaches the place which hardly happens in time. So, it's not the non-Christian Kandhas only

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CXV **Orissa: A New Province: History of Government and Policy 1936-48** P.K.Jena
CXVI **A Personal Narrative of 15 Years Service among the Wild Tribes of Kandhaistan** John Campell Published 1864 and **The History, Rise and Progress of the Operations for the Suppression of Female Infanticide in Hill Tracts of Orissa 1836-1859** Published 1884

who differentiates itself from the Christian community but the church and Christian communities also has a role in promoting social discrimination, even in difficult situations. Such an attitude of churches and missionaries widens the gap and strengthens the communal hatred'. Traditionally, the Panas have been in a better financial state in compare to the Kandhas as, from the beginning, they acted as agents for supplying Meriah (human sacrifice victims) primarily and other essential goods against handsome return. They are the oldest business community of the district. Now also they are flourishing because of their church link that ensures quality education and a better future for their children which a non-Christian tribal can't afford to. So, most of the tribal children attend government schools where quality education is almost a day dream."

Kandhamal's crisis is quite complex and involves many forceful players and organizations.

- One group, the Panas are Scheduled Caste or SC and have mostly converted to Christianity while the other group the Kandhas have maintained their tribal form of Hinduism.
- The Hindu group is entitled to benefits as a tribe (Scheduled tribe)
- The Pana group have converted to Christianity and thus have lost their SC status.
- The Church, having converted the group that is now demanding benefits under a scheme for tribals, is backing the demands of the Christian group.
- The Church is playing a mischievous game here in first converting people out of Hinduism, but yet supporting the demand that the converts be given the benefits that Hindus get in compensation for their social status in a scheme that was started to help Hindus who had been declared "untouchable".
- If the Church did not succeed in changing the "Untouchable" status of the people that it converted it will have to face up to the fact that religion only complicates the issue and does not help.
- The Church can be accused of setting up the dispute in the first place by mass conversion under the pretext that conversion would remove the "untouchable" status of the converts. The conversion, 'of course' is always "free choice, no compulsion, no inducements" By doing that the converts lost any hope of benefiting from schemes that are designed to help Hindus climb out of a social black hole. The converts are now demanding the freebies that Hindu untouchables get. Being Christians - they are no longer untouchable and do not qualify for benefits. The Church is now fighting on their

side for benefits that Hindu untouchables get. The Church needs to admit that the benefits are for Hindu untouchables and by converting them the Church has queered the pitch for the converts. The status of the converted untouchable has become 'more untouchable"

- The Church discredits Hinduism based on "untouchability". It allegedly converts people to uplift them. However the Church is unable to lift those people out of their social status by changing the name of their way of worship. The church compounds the problem by joining in the fight to get the converts benefits that they are not entitled to, but may have been entitled to if they had not converted. This is a blatant manipulation of the system and it completely disregards the socio-political implications involved.

Burdens of the Past

"The Kandha tribal communities who were committed to their religion and sincere to their religion and superstitious practices couldn't accept the Panas who opted to take on Christianity leaving their old religion. So, once living together the Kandhas started hating the Panas blaming them as traitors to their old religion and the society as well. After taking on Christianity, the Panas became close to the missionaries and the British administration as well and notoriously started grabbing the land which was owned by the tribal communities before. This was the major reason of caste conflict because the Kandhas had been seeing the total landscape their own and they had given some land to the Panas to live and supply Meriah as per requirement." Oriya Journalist Basudev Mahapatra

The issues of the Kandhas, their identity and history are not a matter of debate. Questions have been raised in regard to their religious identity. Otherwise there are no doubts that the Kandhas are indigenous to the Kandhamal region. In general they have had significant interaction with various non tribal communities. Most controversy and contradictions in this regard are centered on the Christian converted Panas. The Kandha view of the Panas is highly negative and that is well known. Rather than merely repeating their perspective let us access to view of the scholars, anthropologists, historians, records and other experts in the subject. This allows us to reach conclusions that are unburdened by the various modern day political considerations, biases and prejudices. In this way we can attempt to comprehend the current situation in Kandhamal. This will allow us to present an accurate portrayal of the conditions on the ground.

Many media reports, fact finding missions and commentaries on the Kandhamal crisis ignore, obstinate and deny the foundational subtexts and the functioning dynamics behind the violence. This has only compounded the problems. Efforts that merely suppress the anger and trauma while refusing to recognize the cause of the crisis are bound to fail. Though one may not agree with the views of the Kandha these views still matter. Fear, even a baseless fear, impacts regardless of its rationale or lack of rationality.

Politicians, media and academics tend to trivialize the emotional aspect. It is treated as irrelevant and if addressed at all they label such emotions as hate, prejudice, intolerance. Such an attitude is dysfunctional and hampers the development of accurate conclusions. Without taking into account the emotional core of a crisis, attempts at solutions merely trivialize the sensibilities and the sensitivities of the people. The unfortunate reality is that the media and many politicians are fully cognizant of the emotions at the heart of the matter. They know full well that emotions are the life blood of a community. Yet rather than listening and responding, they merely aggravate the situation. Knowing full well that the Kandhas do not accept the Panas as an indigenous people of Kandhamal, the media continues to promote Christian Panas as Kandhamal natives on par with the Kandha tribes people. Such antics are a key ingredient to the stoking of hostilities. The Kandhas are not being heard when they speak. When words fail, sooner or later the fist is raised.

The reputation of the Panas is crucially important towards unraveling the history of Kandhamal. Whether undeserved or not, the reputation of the Panas in the eyes of their neighbors is vital to understanding the social dynamics of the region. If indeed, such accusations are baseless, the very fact that they exist must be taken into account.

So what is the history of the Pana community in Kandhamal?

"As the Kandhas never use anybody of their own community as a Meriah, the Panas acted as brokers who were supplying Meriah children to the tribal communities. As quoted from British government reports and documents by historian Dasarathi Swaro in his thesis 'The Christian Missionaries in Orissa,' "The Kandhas purchased the (Meriah) victims. Unless bought with a price, they were not deemed acceptable to the goddess (earth – Taru Pennu). Victims from their own tribe were not procurable. The agents, mainly Panas – a clever and business like people lived with the Kandhas and cheated the Kandhas in all possible way, sometimes purchased but more

frequently kidnapped the children (from outside plains) whom they sold to the Kandhas. They occasionally (even) sold their own offspring without any hesitation."[CXVII]

By their characteristic features, the Kandhas are basically a bold and fitfully laborious mountain peasantry of simple, upright in their conduct, sincere in their superstitions, proud of their position as land holders tenacious of their rights. This has been observed even by Britishers like Capt Macpherson. Initially when the missionaries came to the place, called Kandhastan or Agency Area at that time, they found the Panas – now called SCs – notorious, greedy and exploitative and also held the Panas primarily responsible for existence of the Meriah tradition as they were supplying Meriah victims. The British administration acted hard on the Panas and rescued Meriahs from the houses of Panas and the tribal villages as well. It could be to either escape from any hard action from the British government or to keep safe from the reaction of the Kandh tribal community after it became impossible to supply Meriah to the community villages, the Panas gradually came close to the Christian missionaries and got converted into Christians. However, the conversion of Panas into Christianity started from there. The Kandha tribal communities who were committed to their religion and sincere to their religion and superstitious practices couldn't accept the Panas who opted to take on Christianity leaving their old religion. So, once living together the Kandhas started hating the Panas blaming them as traitors to their old religion and the society as well. After taking on Christianity, the Panas became close to the missionaries and the British administration as well and notoriously started grabbing the land which was owned by the tribal communities before. This was the major reason of caste conflict because the Kandhas had been seeing the total landscape their own and they had given some land to the Panas to live and supply Meriah as per requirement. The practice of land grabbing and exploitation went on even after independence of India as most of the Christian Panas got into various government jobs because of their education through missionary support. So, the enmity for the Christian Panas increased in the Kandh and Kui tribal communities. However, the tribal children gradually got education and the educated tribal youth knew the laws of the land and their own rights. The limit of patience in the tribal communities breached when the SCs (Panas) tried to brand them as Kui tribal on a linguistic basis claiming them as Kui speaking people. Kui is the language of the Kandhas and a group of the tribe is called in the name of their language."[CXVIII]

CXVII **Punthi Pustak**, *pg 131* Dasarathi Swaro, *1990*

CXVIII **Kandhamal Violence–Social conflict and Economic gap led to Communal hatred** Basudev Mahapatra September 15, 2008

Another key question is what do the historical records and the anthropological research say regarding the nature of the Pana-Kandha relationship? The answer is revealing.

"The native courts or Darbars enlisted Panas who were famous for their criminal activities as volunteers." P. K. Jena, "Orissa: A New Province: history of government and policy 1936-48[CXIX] *"…as the Panas speak fluent Kui and Oriya languages, they act as interpreters and guides when an outsider comes to the village."*[CXX]

In 1960 the 'Indian Journal of Social Work' stated in its *'Gleanings of a sociological study of the Panas in certain typical villages in Orissa'* that, *"The Panas are the most backward class among the 'untouchables' in Orissa"*[CXXI]

In M. Kennedy's 1907 report to the British Administration entitled the *'Criminal Classes in India'* the Panas of Orissa are highlighted for their criminal activities.[CXXII] In the Orissa District Gazetteer Department of Revenue published in 1972 we find the statement, *"… He was never notified under the criminal tribes act of 1924. Perhaps the reason was that the Salvation Army, having been put to look after the Panas, and the British did not want the Salvation Army to clash with the police in their guardianship over the Panas."*[CXXIII]

This very interesting reference is enlightening. This verifies that the Panas were officially considered as a criminal class. It also highlights an early example of the intentional cover-up of Christian Pana crimes in the name of protecting a Christian organization from the police. It goes without saying that the victims of the crime are traumatized regardless of any cover-up. Such an environment cultivates vigilantism.

The Indian Historical Review from the Indian Council of historical research reports in reference to efforts of the tribes to be given land by the Indian British Administrators. *"It is highly probable that this is a way amongst which sections of the poor, landless tribals could also get themselves identified as criminal castes like the Panas in order to get land."*[CXXIV]

Historical documents record that the British and the native authorities both instituted integration policies allegedly to check the criminal lifestyle of the Panas. Rent free land

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CXIX **Orissa: A New Province: history of government and policy 1936-48** P. K. Jena
CXX **Manav** Anthropological Society of Orissa Pg 155 1982
CXXI **Gleanings of a sociological study of the Panas in certain typical villages in Orissa** Indian Journal of Social Work 1960
CXXII **Criminal Classes in India** M. Kennedy 1907
CXXIII **Orissa District Gazetteer Department of Revenue** 1972
CXXIV **The Indian Historical Review from the Indian Council of Historical Research** pg 182

was given to the Panas in exchange for work. We also find that the Panas were employed as security guards or Chowkidhars. These efforts at rehabilitation are suggestive of the rampant antisocial behavior of some Pana.

Again quoting the Indian Historical Review, *"They were robbers from the banks of the Subarnarekha River and the 'gypsies' who tried to forcibly take paddy, the gangs of the Panas who plundered grain driven by sheer want to crime and gangs of Lodhpur and the dacoits of Mayurbhanj."*[CXXV] Referring to the British government rehabilitation efforts, *"…talked of a plan to start a Pana settlement at Angul, giving the Panas good land and loans which could be written off."*[CXXVI]

A report on the tributary Mahals 1901-1902 from the Bengal Secretariat Press refers to rent free lands that were given to Panas, who worked as Chowkidars in the princely state of Talcher.[CXXVII] In Vocalizing Silence, Political Protests in Orissa 1930-42 Chandi P.Nanda writes, *"We come across evidence of a robbery committed by the villagers, mostly Panas the low castes of Kandhamal."*[CXXVIII] In the report *"Tribal Situation in India"* by Kumar Singh of the Indian institute of advanced study of tribes 1972 it is stated, *"Similar (tribal) revolts also took place in the late State of Hyderabad as late as 1940…and in Orissa against their obnoxious Panas neighbors and notorious land grabbing plainsmen."*[CXXIX]

In the "*Christian missionaries of Orissa: Their impact on 19th Century Society"* it is reported, *"The Kandhas depended on the markets for the important things for which they did not get a fair deal as they were exploited by the Panas, the middlemen."*[CXXX] The Indian journal of Public Administration also confirms that the Pana-Kandha relationship is not a healthy one, *"…the life of the Kandhas are inextricably tied up with the parasitic presence of the Panas."*[CXXXI]

In Biswamoy Pati's *'The Order of Legitimacy, Princely Orissa'* he writes, *"Besides this idea of extending cultivation in order to tap resources, this drive aimed to create collaborators from among sections of affluent tribals and also, as in the case of Talcher, to settle some outcasts like*

[CXXV] **Ibid.** pg 192
[CXXVI] **Talcher settlement 1911-1912** The Orissa Government Press 1963
[CXXVII] **Report on the Tributary Mahals 1901-1902** Bengal Secretariat Press 1902
[CXXVIII] **Vocalizing Silence, Political Protests in Orissa 1930-42** Chandi P.Nanda
[CXXIX] **Tribal Situation in India** Kumar Singh
[CXXX] **Christian missionaries of Orissa: Their Impact on 19th Century Society** pg 130
[CXXXI] **The Indian Journal of Public Administration** pg 541

Panas, who were located as 'criminal castes' and incorporate them into a network of rural police or Chowkidars."[CXXXII]

Because of their role and place in society the Panas developed survival mechanisms that often put them at odds with their neighbors. In modern times we find that the Christian Panas have successfully integrated themselves into the political spectrum. Meanwhile the Kandhas overall remain disenfranchised from the system. *"The Panas though numerically not the most populous are nevertheless the most vocal and aggressive within the lowest strata. ... as compared to the more aggressive Panas will manage to break loose from the upper caste domination over the village political arena and set up political links with political parties operating from outside the village."*[CXXXIII]

This observation is extremely significant in relation to the current Kandhamal context. We find that the Christian Panas have effectively latched their political destiny to not only India's ruling Congress Party but to the political machines of the entire Western world. Thus during the Indian Prime Minister's recent visit to the U.S.A and Europe the plight of the Christian Panas was thrust into the political dialogue of the world's leadership.

"Italy's Foreign Ministry will summon India's ambassador to demand "incisive action" to prevent further attacks against Christians that have left 11 people dead in Orissa, the Italian government said on Thursday. A statement issued after a cabinet meeting also said Italy would ask France, the current EU president, to take up the issue of attacks against Christians at a future meeting of foreign ministers." [CXXXIV]

The Christian Pana influence has saturated the world's media. They have successfully cloaked themselves in the guise of the hapless minority victim unjustly tormented through no fault of their own. As India's Bihari's suffered by the millions with nearly 3000 dead, as the Assamese lost 400 villages and many lives, as bomb blast after bomb blast reaps a grim harvest of thousands dead, the leadership of the U.S., EU and France ignored these realities. Rather they became, for all intents and purposes the spokesman of the Christian Panas of Kandhamal.

CXXXII **The Order of Legitimacy, Princely Orissa** Dr Biswamoy Pati
CXXXIII **Power, Protest and Participation** Subrata Kumar Mitra pp 93 and 160 1982
CXXXIV I**BN-LIVE News** *'Italy's Govt to summon Indian Envoy over Orissa attacks'* August 31, 2008

The aggressive political posture of the Christian Panas has been noted repeatedly. *"… A case study of the political linkages that Panas, a rather aggressive scheduled caste of Orissa have established…"*[CXXXV] The Christian Panas have also been recognized as perennial instigators of political tensions amongst the tribal communities. Regarding tribal uprisings in Orissa, particularly in the case of Kandhamal, the Panas were singled out by all other groups as the sole oppressors.[CXXXVI]

The 1885 publication *'Cyclopaedia of India and of East Asia'* refers to the Panas as *'wild and predatory'*.[CXXXVII] The Orissa District Gazetteers Department of Revenue gives some insight into the Pana-Kandha relationship, *"In the Kandhamals, the Panas were the serfs of the Kandhas. They worked on their farms and wove cloth for them, in return for which they obtained a small area of land, grain for food in all their marriage expenses; they also used to procure victims for the Meriah (human) sacrifices*.[CXXXVIII]

The book *'Manav'* highlights the tribal perspective regarding the Panas. *"Some of them were the Panas and Dombos, a degraded race, the pariahs of the region, peddlers, sycophants and cheats."*

Again and again the image of the Christian Panas as an antisocial disruptive force is reinforced by the historic record and testimonials. Attempts can be made to classify these views as caste hatred or a form of racial prejudice. However, the facts clearly reveal that these labels were applied based on the actions of the Christian Panas and the experiences of those victimized by them. Time and time again violent blowback has engulfed Kandhamal. Rather than being artificially induced or imposed, the violence is directly linked to the activities of the Panas. The evidence indicates that the violent reactions of the Kandha have been in direct response to the various provocations of the Christian Pana community.

Claims that the two communities have always lived in peace represent either a complete lack of information or an effort at blatant propaganda. The facts regarding Kandhamal are verifiable. Ironically the media, a majority of India's political leadership, Church leaders and others are not committed to providing solutions. A

CXXXV **Power, Protest and Participation** Subrata Kumar Mitra pp 93 and 160 1982
CXXXVI **Contemporary Society: Tribal Studies** pg 154 Georg Pfeffer, Deepak Bechera, S.N. Ratha 1997
CXXXVII ***Cyclopaedia of India and of East Asia*** pg 49 Edward Balfour 1885
CXXXVIII **Orissa District Gazeteer Department of Revenue** pg 100 1972

dishonest effort of callous manipulation of the events in Kandhamal has completely skewed the public perception of events.

The calumny heaped upon the Kandhas of Kandhamal is unjust and undeserved. History reveals that there have been repeated uprisings amongst the Kandha tribes. The theme of these uprisings has been a constant and the targets the same. Records show that from the time of Emperor Ashoka to this very day the Kandhas had a tradition based in the warrior ethos. History also proves that rather than a violent people the Kandhas are a dedicated people prepared to die for their lands, traditions and culture. An aggressive people use violence for the conquest of others. The Kandhas use war and violence only in defense and as a last resort. This stands true from the testimonials dating back over 200 years. Similarly, history records the Christian Panas as a frequently aggressive force in Orissa *"My authority for it is the statement made by Biswanth Das, the former Chief Minister of Orissa, in his speech to the constituent assembly. It was in 1940; and the trouble was between the tribal Savaras and the Panas of Orissa. Let me quote Das's own words, "The trouble led to the loss of hundreds of lives at a time when we were all clapped in jail and the British government of Orissa was carried on under section 93 of the Government of India act. The result was that the converted class, the Christian Panas, and the tribal people fought amongst themselves. The latter believed that the Christian converted people were their exploiters who deprived them of their belongings, their lands and wealth. Their fight ultimately led to the imprisonment of thousands of tribals."*[CXXXIX]

Here we see a virtually identical scenario to the current crisis taking place in Kandhamal. A major difference however is that the roots of the current troubles are being ignored. The scenario has been clouded by vested interests and a media seemingly bent on feeding the chaos. Many are quite familiar with the media version which is portraying a kind of alternate reality. The information gleaned from the studies and records spanning over 200 years provides a clear indication of what truly went wrong in Kandhamal. Long-term official ambivalence regarding the many injustices and crimes committed against the tribes has exasperated the issue.

By reviewing additional historical records and scholarly reports we can get a clear perspective on the situation. The anthropological, historical, traditional testimonials are quite clear on the matter. Unfortunate attempts at manipulation of the various

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[CXXXIX] **Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission** pg 373 1943

problems plaguing the region have only lead to more chaos. By denying the historical facts, solutions will be very hard to come by. By accurately identifying the causes and effects of the past and current situations, effective solutions can be implemented. In such an effort it is crucial to identify the nature of the various players in the drama.

Various anthropological studies give us a clear indication regarding the people of Kandhamal. In '*Applied Anthropology in India: Principles and Problems and Case Studies*' it is stated *"… The tribal communities concerned are accustomed to maintain contact with the outside world through some non-tribal community. For instance in Orissa the Panas are philosophers and guides as well as exploiters of certain groups of tribal Saravas. The tribals feel helpless when they do not find their traditional guides by their side."*[CXL]

In '*Social Science Probings*' we find more references to the Panas' past predatory activities, *"In Orissa the money lenders and liquor sellers appointed the Panas to collect debts from the tribal peasants, who in turn, took a recourse to cattle lifting and the occasional dacoitry in their employers homes."*[CXLI]

Through indebtedness, the Kandha became entrapped and obligated to the Panas. Indebtedness was considered a great and consequential burden by the Kandhas. Repayment of debt was considered a sacred duty amongst them. An ancient Kandha saying reflects this and was noted in the 1876 book *'Political Institutions, being Part V of the Principles of Sociology'*. In it sociologist Herbert Spencer notes, *"Among the Kandhas the denial of a debt is a breach of this principle, which is held to be highly sinful. Let a man say they will give up all he has in order to repay his debt."*[CXLII] Unfortunately this noble trait became their Achilles' heel as the Panas, moneylenders and liquor dealers drowned the hapless Kandhas in an ocean of indebtedness.

In the book *'Princely States of Orissa-1905-1947'* the Panas appear notorious for their criminal behavior so much so that, *"The village headman forced the Panas to sleep in one place in order to keep watch of them overnight… These Panas were branded as a criminal caste and to them are attributed the dacoitries and highway robberies committed in Talcher and*

[CXL] **Applied Anthropology in India: Principles and Problems and Case Studies** pg 165 Lalita Prasad Vidyarthi 1984
[CXLI] **Social Science Probings** pg. 502 1984
[CXLII]'**Political Institutions, being Part V of the Principles of Sociology** Herbert Spencer 1876

Dhenkamal States. Prior to the abolition of human sacrifice, the Panas carried out a profitable trade in kidnapping children and selling them to the Kandhas."[CXLIII]

We find many references to this unhealthy relationship between the Panas and the Kandhas. Dr. Dasharati Swaro writes, *"…performing human sacrifice on the new moon day in January, such propitiation was needed to ensure prosperity and happiness and for averting natural calamities. The rite was carried out with the help of the Panas and the Dombs, who provided victims for the sacrifice. Janis, a class of men acted as priests in the observance…"*[CXLIV]

To this day the Panas control the marketing of sacrificial victims albeit buffaloes have now replaced humans. However due to the decline in the frequency of Kandha religious rites and ceremonies, the Panas have suffered economically for lack of buffalo sales.[CXLV]

An excellent metaphor has been applied explaining the Pana-Kandha relationship. *"The Panas happen to be the most numerous scheduled caste group. They live very close to the tribals either in a tribal village or at a little distance from it. The close and integral relationship between these two communities is symbolically expressed by the saying that the Panas constitute the bark while the Kandhas represent the tree."* [CXLVI]

Despite this close proximity between the two groups, the relationship is fraught with mistrust, resentment and tension primarily due to land disputes and inequities related to employment and political representation. Aggressive conversion of the Pana has only complicated matters.

"Tribal needs are both understood and taken advantage of by the Panas who originally were weavers. The fear of defilement which their lowly occupations generated, forced them to lead an arduous life in the different terrains of the agencies of South Orissa. They acted as interpreters to the Kandhas, who did not know the Oriya language. However, they are dubbed as a parasitic group, as they allegedly exploit Kandhas by taking advantage of the latter's innocence and ignorance. In course of time, Panas along with other non-tribals took tribal lands into their possession paying a paltry sum in exchange. Some of the lands-less tribals were forced to work as hired labor by the fellow Kandhas or non-tribal Oriyas. Others changed their occupation to work

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CXLIII **Princely States of Orissa 1905-1947** J.K. Samal 1988
CXLIV **The Christian Missionaries in Orissa: Their Impact on 19th Century Society** Dasharati Swaro 1990
CXLV **Rural Development and Political Participation Amongst Tribals** pg 41 Pranab Mangaraj
CXLVI **Ibid.** pg 40

as laborers in the non-farm sector i.e. construction of roads and buildings etc…in the domain of government service, the Panas have fared much better compared to the tribals. The more ambitious and the more dynamic among them have started taking up the career of a full time politician."[CXLVII]

The above references are important for they verify the inhumane and socially detrimental aspects of both the tribal and non-tribal communities. Another significant point is that the references are related to the Native Princely States. Some have argued that the basis for the 'Criminal Castes' classification is based in British racism. However it is now quite clear that the Panas were identified as a predatory group by the Indians as well. It can be argued that the Panas were driven to criminality through desperation. The social injustices that trapped them within an unjust caste system cannot be ignored or denied. Yet the fact remains that the tribal victims of Christian Pana criminality remain victims nevertheless. Regardless of the 'how and why' some Panas acted in a predatory manner. The Kandhas were fully aware of the danger and acted accordingly.

Regarding human sacrifice; many of the Kandhas themselves institutionalized the gruesome crime of human sacrifice and the Panas facilitated the ritual. We also find instances of the Panas and Kandhas supporting each other in other criminal activities. *"It was towards June 1818 that again the Kandhas of Ghumsar assisted by the Panas of Khallikote made frequent incursions into Banpur and engaged themselves in looting."*[CXLVIII]

The Pana-Kandha relationship has always been difficult and of questionable benefit. It is a relationship punctuated by exploitation, alienation and ritualized murder. *"…As in the case of the Kandhas, there is a class of Harijan called the Panas, who have got equal hold over the Saravas, and they equally exploit them."*[CXLIX] *"The Adivasis (Tribals) are exploited not only by the clean caste people but also by some of the Harijans like the Panas."*[CL]

Again referring to sources highlighting the Indian view of the Panas we find that, *"The Panas did not care for cultivation but caused a great deal of mischief."* And, *"On the whole (the population) was truthful, peaceable and law abiding, the only exception being the Panas, Dombs, and Gandas, who for the most part being landless and indolent lived from hand to mouth and*

CXLVII **Rural Development and Political Participation Amongst Tribals** pg 40 Pranab Mangaraj
CXLVIII **History and Culture of the Kandha Tribes** pg 35 Nihar Rajan Patnaik
CXLIX **Vanya Jati** 1957
CL **Government and Politics in Orissa** pg 90 B.B.Jena & Jaya Krishna Baral pg 90

furnished the larger portion of the jail population."[CLI] *"In 1898 there were 15 lower primary schools meant for the Panas, a semi aboriginal race notorious for their criminal profession. The teachers in these schools were also Panas."*[CLII]

Despite their low social standing and identification as members of the criminal class, the Panas have traditionally fared better than their tribal neighbors. They have prospered in comparison with the tribal communities. This is due to the ongoing efforts of the various money lenders, merchants that invested them as agents and the rehabilitation efforts of the Native Kings and the British Administration. The Christian Panas were employed as rural police, given free land, financial grants and resided at government mandated settlements that had been developed solely for the Christian Pana community. Conversion to Christianity availed them of the political protection and financial opportunities provided by Western based Church institutions.

Overall, the Panas were the focus of several official rehabilitation efforts. Quoting M. Kennedy's 1902 report, *"…To start a Pana settlement at Angul, giving the Panas 'good' lands and loans, which would be written off."* [CLIII] There are several other references to various British rehabilitation schemes of the Panas. A major effort was made involving the Salvation Army. Entire colonies were run by the Salvation Army in tandem with the British administration. As stated earlier, crimes committed by the Christian 'Salvation Army Panas' went unreported. This was done in order not to disrupt the success of the rehabilitation efforts. A major factor leading to this approach was conversion. Converted Panas were to be seen as the fulfillment of the rehabilitation initiative. To the Western mind, the act of conversion to Christianity by a member of a 'criminal caste', whose ancestors were directly involved in human sacrifice, was an act of rehabilitation in itself. The evidence of any continuing criminal activities were therefore suppressed.[CLIV]

It is also important to reiterate that rehabilitation efforts were not solely carried out by the British in some haughty colonial act of prejudice. In fact such Native efforts predate the British schemes. In the Indian administrated States employment, free lands and

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[CLI] **Unrest in the Princely States of Orissa: Dhenkamal and Talcher 1938-1947** pg 5 B.C. Rath 1993
[CLII] **Orissa Historical Research Journal** Kedarnath Mahapatra Superintendent of the Research, Orissa State Museum
[CLIII] **Indian Historical Review** pg 182
[CLIV] **Underdevelopment and Destitution: Essay on Orissan Society** pg 100 Jagannath Pathy (DOUBLE CHECK)

accommodations were provided for the Panas. For both the Indian Princes and the British these rehabilitation efforts were directly related to issues of law and order. However for the British it was more than that. *"Under colonial rule, the constitution of the notion of a criminal caste drew on prevailing discourses about crime, class, and work, as well as on British notions about the nature of Indian society. Transforming Indian communities into criminal castes involved the construction of a body of knowledge defining the nature, habits, and characteristics of criminal castes. Through the inculcation of habits of discipline, Salvation Army reformatories sought to reform criminal tribe's people into subjected and productive bodies. Processes of reform were linked to the spatiotemporal expansion of the British Empire and the constitution of new forms of productive relations."*[CLV]

The official explanation of the British administration's Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 states, *"… when we speak of `professional criminals', we mean a tribe whose ancestors were criminals from time immemorial, who are themselves destined by the usages of caste to commit crime, and whose descendants will be offenders against the law, until the whole tribe is exterminated or accounted for in the manner of the thugs."*[CLVI]

Through these rehabilitation projects and conversion the Panas achieved a political and economic status above and beyond that of the neighboring tribal communities. *"The Panas were the more organized and politically active group among the non-elites, while the destitute tribals had the least influence in the affairs of the village."*[CLVII] And, *"The Pana Community is richer than any other community in the area."*[CLVIII] From these references we can glean a clear picture of the socio-political reality regarding the inter-Pana-tribal relationship.

Throughout the history of the British Empire from the Americas, Africa, Polynesia, Europe and Asia, the British followed a strategy based on the use of an empowered local minority. Through the identification and empowerment of a native group resentful of its inferior social and political condition and status, the British were able to

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[CLV] **Colonizing and Transforming the Criminal Tribesman: The Salvation Army in British India, American Ethnologist, Vol. 18, No. 1.** pg 106 Rachel J Tolen 1991

[CLVI] **The Indian Caste System and The British** Kevin Hobson
[CLVII] **Social Disorganization and Contempory Social Crisis** pg 258 A. Kumar
[CLVIII] **Election Politics and Voting Behavior in India: Study of Orissa** B.B. Jena and Jaya Krishna Beral 1992

gain an instant localized support base. This same method was employed in Kandhamal as well.

Journalist Farzand Ahmed of India Today Magazine wrote in this regard, *"The Britishers realized the qualities of the Panas and their social conflict with the Kandhas and used them as 'middlemen' to collect revenue from the Kandha subjects. Even the salt monopoly was given to the Panas. As most Panas had converted they were favored by the British rulers despite being a demographic minority- about 19% against 52% Kandhas, they started dominating all socio-economic fields."*[CLIX]

The Panas often refer to the harsh treatment at the hands of the Kandhas. There is no denying this fact. Unwelcome but allowed to stay, the Panas were pariahs and unclean in the eyes of the Kandhas. The book '*Man in India'* gives us a portrait of the situation. *"…Two Panas do have land (an exception lying in the discretion of the Kandha 'Panchayat' council of the hamlet.) Each Pana possessing shifting land pay 3 kilograms of red grain to the fund."*[CLX] And, *"However it is said that the Kandhas are ready to share their land with the deserving Panas on request."*[CLXI]

In 1877 William Hunter, in a *'Statistical Account of Bengal'*, identified the Panas as "*a servile caste in the Orissa Tributary States*." [CLXII] More evidence in this regard, *"To this day there is a settlement of Panas-a kind of ghetto- attached to every large Kandha village, where they weave cloth the Kandhas require and work as farmlands."*[CLXIII]

In a report by Journalist Priyanka P. Narain, the conditions in Kandhamal are clearly delineated. *"The Kandhas are Kings of this land. They are the original tribe to inhabit this sprawl of jungles, mountains and lakes, making up a bit more than half of the population. The Panas, a mix of scheduled caste (S.C.) Hindus and Christian converts, have transformed themselves from landless exiles into business leaders… The Kandhas, uneducated and guileless, still live as they always have-cultivating land, drinking mohuli (home brew) and building private harems. But the Panos (Panas), long considered "untouchable" by the Kandhas, are different. They came to this area two centuries ago when a king drove them out from their original homes in neighboring Gajapati district. They spent decades as landless refugees, relying*

[CLIX] **India Today** October 18, 2008
[CLX] **Man in India** pg 12 Sarat Chandra Roy
[CLXI] **Ibid.**
[CLXII] **Statistical Account of Bengal** pg 365 William Hunter
[CLXIII] **Orissa District Gazeteer Department of Revenue** pg 99 1972

on the Kandhas to survive. Poor and facing discrimination, the developed sharper survival instincts than the Kandhas, "So when opportunity comes to better their lot, they grab it," said Brahma Behera, President of the Pano Samaj, a welfare organization in Phulbani. Unlike the Kandhas, they have seized opportunity to better their lives; jockeying for government jobs, educating their children, becoming middlemen to sell marked-up Kandha produce, even converting to Christianity for benefits doled out by the missionaries. In the process they have overtaken their rulers. The differences are stark; today the Panos of Kandhamal visibly have better homes, wear better clothes and lobby together. Siba Sankar Sahani, a Hindu Pano who is a member of the Pano Samaj organization, says that the actions of some have given everyone a bad name. "See Panos are more chalak (wily) than the Kandhas. But not all Panos. We are not trying to take away anything from the Kandhas. We have lived here for 200 years. We also have rights…outsiders are to blame. They have come here and use both communities as weapons for votes." Certainly, caste and religious politics are at play and even Christian Panos agree with the assessment. "Outsiders have come to this district and their business has flourished. Now they have political aspirations, so they are inciting Kandhas against the Panos." said Nalinkant Nayak, a Christian Pano, "Yet, the July 2007 court order was a watershed that demolished trust between both communities. Lambodhar says of Panos, "They will take away everything they can. Now we had to stop them."[CLXIV]

The scenario has been described vividly. The seeds of turmoil were planted long ago. The what, how, when and why have been obscured but the facts reveal the complete picture. The Panas, as a community, appear to have developed anti-social behaviors and predated upon their neighbors. It is likely that they developed these tendencies as a kind defensive response mechanism. Either way the records and Kandha testimonials regarding the Panas are in synch. The 'legend' regarding the exile of the Panas to the Kandhamal region is a historical fact. They arrived approximately 200 years ago as unwelcome but tolerated migrants. Cognizant of the stigma attached to the Panas yet recognizing their utility, the Kandhas entered into a socio-economic relationship with them. This provided the Kandhas a greater access to the outside world and its trade goods and products. The arrangement was initially beneficial for both parties.

Through the application of a 'politically correct' Western lens it is easy to project the Kandhas as the oppressive majority group. However this is an inaccurate view which only leads to mistaken assumptions and false conclusions. First we must bear in mind

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[CLXIV] **Livemint** Priyanka P. Narain

that upon the arrival of the Panas, the Kandhas could have easily chased them off. They could have just as well annihilated them. Rather they cautiously allowed them to remain in their midst. The Kandhas are spread throughout the region and also resided in the very Ghumsar area from which the Panas were exiled. The Kandhas were obviously aware of the exile of the Panas and the reason behind it. Fair or unfairly, the historical records are clear that the Panas had a reputation as criminals and cheats. They were a shunned group, pariahs in the words of early British records. Yet the Kandha accommodated the Panas. The survival instinct of the Kandhas was obviously at work in both their accommodation and in their alienation of the Panas. The Kandhas were not alone in their identification of the Panas as untouchables or outcastes. It was a stigma that, unfortunately, followed them throughout India. A major reason for this was that some Pana handled dead bodies and have been known to eat the flesh of naturally deceased cows and bulls. In the eyes of many they were thus to be shunned. Obviously the Kandhas had ongoing interactions and communications with the outside world. Based upon this they had identified the Panas within the same social classification prevalent within the outside world. In this we also find evidence of the cultural continuity being maintained between the tribes and non-tribes.

Assuredly the social hierarchal systems were flawed yet that was the harsh reality. It was a reality that allowed for infanticide and human sacrifice. It is into this context we must frame the Kandha-Pana relationship.

The significance of the Meriah cult's human sacrifices and later buffalo sacrifices to the Pana-Kandha interplay cannot be downplayed. By establishing themselves as a dependable source of sacrificial victims, which according to Kandha tradition must be purchased, the Panas integrated themselves into the religious fabric of tribal society. This aspect of the relationship exists to this very day. As the generations passed the Panas role as a bridge and via medium to the outside world was strengthened. By the time the British began their violent conquest of Kandhastan (Official British title for the Kandhamal region); in the name of repressing infanticide and human sacrifice, there was a shift in the Pana-Kandha socio-political dynamic. It was at this time that the Panas began converting to Christianity. This along with the Pana's support of the British war effort outraged the Kandhas. In their eyes, their past accommodation of the Panas had been rewarded with ingratitude and betrayal as the Panas gravitated towards the British administration and Christian missionaries.

The Kandhas developed new methods of passive resistance and further removed themselves from the British world and economy. Meanwhile the Christian Panas integrated themselves into the British system through education, employment and eventually gained a political and economic status above and beyond the Kandha tribes people. The empowered Christian Panas, despite being in the minority, soon controlled the economy of the region and along with it a majority of tribal lands.

A graphic description of this relationship is presented by one of history's leading experts on the Indian tribal condition. British born Verrier Elwin was one such expert. After India's independence, Elwin became an Indian national and was eventually appointed as an adviser on tribal affairs for North-East India by India's first Prime Minister Nehru.

In the work *'Economic History of Orissa'* his views are highlighted in regards to the Pana-Kandha dynamic. The disparity between the tribals and non-tribals is vividly portrayed. In the chapter entitled *'Economic Life of the Tribals'* the Panas are described as having an *'extraordinary and very sinister domination'* over the Kandha people. *"The tribals were economically exploited by the neighboring Panas. The Panas had established an extraordinary and very sinister domination over the simple (tribals) Kandhas and Lanjhia Sauras (Saravas). Verrier Elwin, citing the example of the Sauras (Saravas), writes, 'The Sauras as a tribe are obsessed with the thought of death and the menace of the world. All disease, all domestic or economic tragedy is the work of irritable ghosts who must be instantly appeased. When, therefore, someone in the family gets a touch of fever, the Saura, assuming that his deceased uncle is annoyed with him, rushes off to get a pig or buffalo to sacrifice. Being in a highly excited state of mind, he agrees to any price so long as he can get what he wants quickly. He usually gets his sacrificial stock from his Pana neighbor, and by this, more than by any other means, that he (the Tribal) gets under his (the Pana's) control. The Panas sets a high price on the animal and arranges that the price shall be paid in grain at pre-war rates at the next harvest plus an appropriate interest. When harvest time comes round, the Panas spend their days standing on the Sauras threshing floors scooping in their dues, and the Sauras say that they fill their basket without any proper heed to the exact amount they take.' Sometimes, the tribals had to suffer at the hands of the Dombs (another nontribal group related to the Panas.) During the hard months, the tribal people got loans from the moneylenders. Here the Dombs played the role of middlemen between the tribal people and the moneylenders. The moneylenders who were but casual visitors to tribal villages came in direct contact with the Dombs and transacted their business through*

them. The unscrupulous Dombs very often played tricks with the simple and innocent tribals and deprived them of their valuable holdings on false pretext. Thus it has been rightly stated, 'An Adivasi (tribal) is a peculiar economic man whose activities are most uneconomic in character. He earns an income, spends in excess of it, and thus incurs a debt which lies hanging on his head like the sword of Damocles."[CLXV]

Indebtedness to the predatory moneylenders, and their Pana middlemen, combined with land alienation has been at the core of the social instability of Kandhamal. Exploitation of the tribal communities has long been pandemic and continues to this day. *"For a long time in the past, the tribals of Orissa had been exploited economically by the Sundhis, the Sahukars or moneylenders, Panas, Dombs and Oriya traders. The aboriginals were addicted to drinking and went on a spree on such occasions as festivals and ceremonies like marriages. The sundhis or the distilling class took every opportunity to encourage the consumption of liquor. To encourage them to buy liquor, the Sundhis used to supply it either on credit or by advancing them loans of money. Very often the poor tribals were unable to repay and had to give up their lands to pay back the loans. T.J. Maltby reported about the Kondh (Kandha) of Ganjam, 'In hot weather, what the Kandhas call the time of hunger, when they have eaten most of their store and exchanged the rest of these for the Sundhi's liquor, the Kandha generally wants to borrow, and this Sundhi lends a Kandha, say Rupees 2, on security of two or three of the Kandha's fields of paddy, to be paid in kind when the next crop is cut. The Kandha has no friends to be present when he borrows the money, no written agreement is made, and when the Sundhi returns in November with his Oriya followers and declares Rupees 4 and not Rupees 2 and has his Oriya witnesses, the Kandha is helpless; the Sundhi proceeds to cut the crop with his own people and walks off with four times the value of the money he gave the Kandha, and the Kandha says nothing. Indebtedness was one of the main features of the tribal economy. The tribals' tendency of borrowing was very great and it has been said that they were born in debt and lived in debt, passing on their burden to their progeny. The Sahukars or moneylenders used to give the tribals money easily for their drinks, marriages and agricultural operations. Taking advantage of the illiteracy, ignorance, gullibility and indebtedness of the hill people, the moneylenders used to dictate terms, calculate the interests and manipulate the annual deductions of wages earned or repayments and readjust the accounts in such a way that the final repayment of the principal was difficult. Thus the tribals subsequently lost their lands to the*

[CLXV] **Economic History of Orissa** pp 378-379 Nihar Ranjan Patnaik

moneylenders. In certain cases they had to remain completely under these moneylenders. This system thus degenerated into serfdom."[CLXVI]

Thus these forces feast parasitically upon the tribes. By enacting schemes which perpetuated the virtual economic enslavement of the people, these outside groups maintained an iron grip upon the lives of the Kandha. The Panas, as the middlemen for the moneylenders and liquor distillers, were center stage in these predatory schemes. As the tribes lost control of their lands and control of the fruits of their labor, their state of crisis became entrenched.

The roots of these problems included Forest Preservation Laws developed by the British and eventual encroachment by non-tribal groups. For all intents and purposes, the Kandha became landless within their own lands as the Christian Panas took control. By the time of India's Independence the Panas represented much of the region's Christian population. However upon implementation of Indian Constitution's Reservation system, Pana Christians were left out of the system designed for the upliftment of their people. As a member of the S.C. (Scheduled Caste) a non-converted Pana could take advantage of the benefits set aside for his community; whereas for the converted Christian Pana of the same family these benefits were legally inaccessible.

Kandha, like all Indian tribes, were also given a legal status as S.T. (Scheduled Tribe) that guaranteed them special protections and reservations to education, government and legislative positions. The big difference and sticking point is that the tribal can convert, engage in active evangelism, build churches and still avail of all benefits set aside for a tribal. On the other hand the Pana or any Scheduled Caste that converts loses all rights in the reservation system. Regardless of the fact that despite a change in religious identity, the S.C. is, in most cases, remain nearly as destitute and socially disempowered as any tribal. The Christian Panas of Kandhamal however have managed to rise to a level above their tribal neighbors.

The fault line lies in the reservation system itself and in the failure of the Christian leadership to focus on the needs of its converts. The welfare of the converts has, unfortunately, taken a back seat to the evangelization of the 'Unreached Peoples,' and 'Church Planting'. Thus the Pana Christians have been attempting to gain their privileges guaranteed by the Constitution. However they have presented a skewed

[CLXVI] **Ibid.** pp 377-378 Nihar Ranjan Patnaik

perspective and are following an unjust methodology in pursuit of their claims. Ideally the Kandhas and Christian Panas should join together and demand benefits based on need rather than identity. However the Christian Panas are attempting to create an artificial classification and manipulate the system in an attempt to force it to meet their demands. By reinventing history and shedding their anthropological identification they are claiming to be an unrecognized tribal group.

Regarding land; despite repeated court injunctions favoring Kandha land claims the Christian Panas are refusing to return encroached lands. Many Churches have been 'planted' on stolen property. The government acts powerless to enforce the decisions of its judicial branch. Despite being in the minority the Christian Panas control the legislative representative seats for the Kandhamal district. The Kandhas are thus voiceless and have no representation within the Indian Parliamentary system. The comparative economic prosperity of the Christian Panas viz a viz the Kandhas adds fuel to the tension as the Kandhas are repeatedly outmaneuvered by the Christian Panas. Adding another layer of complication to the overall Kandhamal situation, since 2003, an ongoing state of war continues between the Maoists and the Kandhas. This led to the formation of an alliance between the Maoists and the Christian Panas. Recognition of the Maoist-Kandha conflict and the Maoist-Christian Pana alliance is crucial to understanding current events in Kandhamal. Details in this regard will be addressed in another section of this report.

It is a great irony that despite all the evidence verifying the actual conditions that have created the turmoil in Kandhamal, these facts are ignored. Rather, certain vested interests blame unrelated groups and events as the cause of the violence. Tragically this only serves to compound the crisis. No effective solutions can be applied without recognizing the underlying currents that have long plagued the people of Kandhamal. The hidden and obscured legacy of the Pana-Tribal relationship continues to undermine any efforts at establishing communal harmony. By ignoring the ground realities of the situation and focusing on completely unrelated elements leads to a misdiagnoses of the problem. Without recognizing the actual dysfunctional mechanisms of a society, it is impossible to implement effective and practical solutions.

Expressing the historical background is not a mere application of blame nor is it an exercise in prejudice. Rather it is a necessary aspect of any investigation with a focus on solutions. The social body politic of Kandhamal is diseased. The correct remedy must be

applied. Only an accurate diagnosis will allow for an accurate prescription. Once the disease is correctly identified, it and the related traumas can be effectively dealt with. Knowledge is power because it enables correct thought and action in accordance with the situation at hand. Thus with prejudice towards none nor bias for some, effective solutions can be formulated. India's legal system provides an excellent framework that will allow for justice, and eventually peace, to be restored to Kandhamal.

The Jalespatta Girls' School Massacre

August 23: Five persons including Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Swami Lakshmananda and four disciples, including a woman, were killed in an attack by suspected CPI-Maoist cadres on an ashram at Jalespata in the Kandhamal district. The armed extremists opened fire and hurled bombs after entering the ashram (hermitage) run by Swami Lakshmananda at 8.30 p.m during a religious celebration. Orissa Director-General of Police Gopal Chandra Nanda told, "We suspect that the assailants could be Maoists."[CLXVII]

Janmashtami is an ancient Hindu festival commemorating the birth of Lord Krishna. It is the most widely celebrated Hindu festival in the world. Hindus from all denominations celebrate this annual celebration. In a culture of many festivals, the birthday of Lord Krishna is known as a Mahotsav or great festival. It would not be inaccurate to say it is on par with Christmas in terms of its significance to Hindus. It is also the foundation day of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). Ever since, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, popularly known as Swamiji, had moved to Kandhamal 40 years back, he had marked the occasion of Janmashtami with public festivities. Every year, under his guidance, the festivities had increased in popularity and attendance. This year Swami Lakshmananda was to celebrate Janmashtami at one of the school's he had founded. A grand occasion, hundreds of people would soon be milling around the campus. He had founded many schools for the tribal and other economically downtrodden people. This school in particular was a residential girls' school named Shankaracharya Kanya Ashram located in Jalespatta, Kandhamal. Jalespatta is a remote area and the school was one of the bright spots for the region.

On August 23, 2008, the Swami, along with the school administration staff, including the school Principal Mata Bhaktimayee and students were observing a ritual fast and

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CLXVII **South Asia Terrorism Portal** 'Orissa 2008 Timeline'
satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/maoist/timelines/index.html#orissa

busy preparing for the upcoming program. This year, the Janmashtami or birthday of Lord Krishna - one of the most auspicious days of Hindu calendar covered both August 23 and 24. Millions of Hindus around the world fasted on August 23, 2008, and Vedanta Keshari Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati also fasted on that day along with his followers and colleagues the monks Kishore Baba, Amritanand Baba, Mother Bhaktimaye (a lady monk and the principal of the Sankaracharya Kanya Ashram) and others. The Swami sang some Bhajans or devotional songs with the students and teachers. Afterwards he offered his evening prayers and was relaxing with Kishore Baba and another friend. Suddenly, as if in premonition of upcoming events, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati turned to Kishore Baba and said, *"Never fear death in the service of your Motherland."* This turned out to be the Swami's last instruction. The 130 girls of the school were busy preparing and cooking. Overall it was a scene of comfort and warmth and for the desperately poor young girls, a place of security and hope. What followed shattered their peace and security and would horrify anyone.

The following firsthand eyewitness accounts relate the terror and traumatic memories that will remain for a lifetime. *"We suddenly heard loud cracking sounds. At first we thought someone must be bursting firecrackers so we ran to the main gate. Then we suddenly saw people screaming in terror and running helter-skelter. There was blood all over the place. Then we saw Swamiji (Ji is an Indian term of respect) and Mataji (Mother) and others lying in their own blood. Horrified I shouted and ran away as we all started running here and there in panic,"* Anita Pradhan 15 years old.

"I ran to the main gate. There were men running around and there were loud cracking and bursting sounds. I heard Swamiji and others cry out as the guns fired. I saw people running for their lives. I was very frightened thinking we were all going to be killed. Another girl and I ran into a room to hide and we stayed there afraid to move. We sat huddled together, crying in the dark for a very long time," Vijayalakshmi Mullick 14 years old.

"When I heard the loud sounds I ran out to see what it was. I saw people lying dead and blood everywhere. I recognized Swamiji lying there on the ground and I touched his feet in homage. There were still warm but he didn't move. It was then that I knew he was dead. Mataji was lying there too. I started crying. I was so scared," said Kusum Pradhan, 12 years old.

On Saturday, the ashram was preparing for Janmashtami, when around dinnertime a group of 18 armed assailants surrounded the place. Others stated that there were

approximately 30-40 people directly involved; some as attackers and others acting as scouts waiting in the periphery. Eyewitnesses said about four of the assailants carried assault rifles; apparently AK-47s and many others had homemade revolvers. Two of the four home guards stationed for security had gone to eat and only two of them remained, guarding the premises. The assailants tied down the two guards, and gagged them. They then sought out the Swamiji within the premises carried out the massacre and then fled. Before fleeing, the assailants warned the guards not to raise an alarm and fled the scene.

This was the horrific scene as described by some of the students. It all began around 7:30 PM on Saturday, August 23rd. A majority of the stick wielding guards had just gone for dinner when suddenly anywhere from 18 to 30 armed and masked man attacked the school. Armed with firearms including 7.62 mm assault rifles, 9mm pistols, carbines and homemade pistols, axes and knives they rushed onto the school grounds. Some jumped the walls while the others came to the front gate and captured and gagged the two unarmed guards. In an apparent attempt to cause panic and terror, the assailants threw grenades in several directions causing loud explosions. As they proceeded, the attackers strategically placed themselves at various vantage points throughout the campus. The men armed with the assault rifles spotted Baba Amritananda and according to eyewitnesses, mistaking him for Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, they instantly fired at him. The bullets hit him in the back as he fell mortally wounded and died soon thereafter. As the assassins methodically searched the main house they discovered a man napping in the guard room. His name was Puranjan Ganthi. He was visiting the school and was planning to spend the festive occasion of Janmashtami with his daughter. The assassins shot and killed him in cold blood.

The School Principal Mata Bhaktimayee had been watching the evening news in the company of one of her students Manika Behera. Hearing the gunshots and explosions, they saw Baba Amritananda fall. He had been standing in their view just outside of her room. In an effort to protect the young student, Mata Bhaktimayee grabbed Manika and rushed outside with her taking her out of the line of fire. Mata then swiftly came back in toward Swamiji's room, shut the door and locked it from inside. In an effort to protect her mentor, she shut Swamiji into the bathroom. She then returned to the front door and desperately tried to hold the door shut with her body weight. The attackers began tearing into the door with axes. Within a short time the door was shattered and

the gunmen fired at Mataji killing her on the spot. Hearing the gunshots and the shouts of the attackers, Kishore Baba rushed upon the scene attempting to defend Swamiji. Unarmed, he was no match for the attackers who gunned him down instantly. Opening the shattered door the assassins searched the room. Seeing the closed door of the bathroom they began chopping at it with their axes. They quickly found Swamiji in the small room and fired at him at point blank range. Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati died instantly.

In a bestial rage, the killers then mutilated the bodies of their victims with knives and axes. Swamiji's arms and legs were hacked and large gouges were made in his body. Shortly thereafter, upon the completion of the massacre, the killers retreated into the night.

Shankar Baba and Madhu Baba were the first to arrive upon the scene. Stunned they took in the brutal scene. Five people lay dead. Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, the School Principal Mata Bhaktimayee, a visiting parent Puranjan Ganthi and two monks and students of Swamiji, Amritananda Baba and Kishore Baba. Many of the girls remained hidden for hours throughout the campus in fear of their lives. Preparations for a sacred day had ended in a night of terror. Their temple of learning had become a killing field and their guiding light snuffed out.[CLXVIII]

The life of Vedanta Keshari Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati which had begun in Gurujanga, Angul was ended, a mere 100 miles away, in Kandhamal.

From Backwardness to Leadership

"We lost a monk who dedicated his whole life serving in the jungles to guide society and serve humanity through his valuable efforts. His commitment towards the social-economic and spiritual development of the State is unparalleled," Amar Prasad Satapathy, General Secretary Indian National Congress Party, Orissa, India. [CLXIX]

Who was Vedanta Keshari Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati? Why did an elderly man of 82 years old become the target for assassination? At an age when most people retire to the comforts of their silver years, what drove the Swami to live in the remote jungles

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CLXVIII **Author Interviews with Sanjaya Jena**, President of the Hindustan Samachar News Agency September 2008
CLXIX **Times of India** August 26, 2008

of India? Through his charisma and recognition as a guru he could have easily lived in any city, developed a well-to-do to do middle class following, traveled the world or sold his wisdom ala Deepak Chopra, making millions and adored by even millions more. Yet rather than banking in on the popular Guru culture swami Lakshmananda Saraswati chose to move to the wild an untamed hinterlands of Orissa.

Vedanta Keshari (Lion of Vedanta) Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati was born on Shravan Krishna Navami in Gurujanga village in Angul, Orissa in the year 1926. Like the many thousands he would later serve, he was born in a poor low caste family. In his early 20s he married and had a son and was employed in government service. At the young age of 25 years old, following in the footsteps of India's countless sages, seers and saints, he became a renunciate. Taking the monk's vow of an ascetic Sanyas, he then spent some years in the Himalayas doing austerities, worship, meditation and prayer. As he performed his Sadhana-spiritual practices, he became more and more concerned about the plight of his fellow Oriya people. A vision of seva or service took hold in his heart. He felt compelled to return to Orissa, the land of his birth. This social consciousness and concern for others above and beyond one's own religious practices and pursuits is a key feature in the lives of India's great transformational figures.

Millions upon millions of India's hermits, ascetics and Yogis remove themselves from the troubles of this world. Living isolated lives of solitude, they rarely involve themselves in the hustle and bustle of society. Such people are honored, worshiped as they focus on their own spiritual upliftment. Believing that the goal of life is to prepare oneself for the afterlife, they avoid contact with the worldly minded and live according to their needs. The West has long been unable to comprehend this integral aspect of Indian culture. This same lack of understanding has infected the thinking of some allegedly progressive Indians as well.

As an example, after the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, some Indian media outlets attempted to sully his character. They attempted to accuse him of abandoning his young wife and child and questioned his life of commitment. However it is through such acts of individual sacrifice that allows one to care for the children of an entire community and nation. As a direct result of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati's renunciation, he was able to benefit the lives of hundreds of thousands of children throughout Orissa. The British prejudices against the customs and culture of

India are obviously still at work. In this regard a foreign observer of the Indian condition, Kevin Hobson puts it into perspective.

"What the British failed to realize was that Hindus existed in a different cosmological frame than did the British. The concern of the true Hindu was not his ranking economically within society but rather his ability to regenerate on a higher plane of existence during each successive life."[CLXX]

Today, rather than the British, there are many Indians who lack understanding, having been disenfranchised from their own ancestral culture. A hostile media reinforces their prejudice and ignorance as they attempt to straitjacket foreign mentalities and biases upon Indian society.

The unparalleled commitment of Swamiji to the upliftment of the downtrodden and socially backward was based upon his dedication to the people of India. His was the kind of work encouraged and endorsed by former Prime Minister Jawaharwal Nehru. *"In the tribal areas many of them (Christian missionaries) have devoted their lives to the tribes there. I wish that there were Indians who were willing to serve the tribal folk in this way. I know that there are some Indians now who are doing this, but I would like more of them to do so."*[CLXXI]

Few fulfilled this aspiration of Nehru's more than Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati whose many projects had revitalized the socio-cultural fabric and people of Orissa.

Recognizing that Cows are not only a cultural icon, a sacred animal, but as the foundation of a self sufficient eco-system, Swamiji was an avid Cow protection activist. Long before the rise of PETA, Hindus had practiced animal protection. In fact, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati first returned to Orissa to participate in the Go-Rakhya Andolan or Cow Protection Movement. He had planned on returning to the practice of his penances in the Himalaya Mountains yet he recognized the dire plight of his people. In 1967-68 the social activist Sri Bhupendra Kumar Basu had brought his attention to the people of Kandhamal. He thus dedicated his life to helping those that needed it most. In pursuit of this goal he moved to the untamed lands of Kandhamal.

Kandhamal is a tribal dominated region with the Kandhas forming exactly 51.96% of the population. A vast majority of these people live below the poverty line and are illiterate. In a selfless act of dedication, Swamiji relocated to the Kandhamal district in

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[CLXX] **The Indian Caste System and The British -Ethnographic Mapping and the Construction of the British Census in India** http://www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/search_frameset.htm
[CLXXI] **Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru** Second Series, Volume 18, New Delhi, 1996 pp.733-34

order to focus on humanitarian efforts. By 1969 Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati had set up his first Ashram in Chakapad village in Kandhamal district. From the very beginning, Swamiji had recognized the nefarious impact of Christian conversion upon the social fabric of the region. Rather than some Hindu fundamentalist Christian xenophobic attitude, Swamiji was in synch with native traditionalists the world over. Like the Shamans and leaders of the Native American tribes at the forefront of the struggle for the preservation of their cultures and traditions, Swamiji had no issue with the teachings of Jesus Christ. However such traditionalists always fought against the inherent prejudices that rejected Native religion and spirituality that run parallel with missionary efforts. In Swamiji's view, if the Christians had come in the mood of the Parsis of Persia, to compliment India's native culture and religious ethos with the sweetness of Christ, he would be among the first to welcome them. However the obvious record of conversion with its Triumphalist agenda, that demands hostility to the Native ways, demanded an answer.

The Conversion ideology is based upon the 'superiority 'of Christianity over the traditional indigenous religion. Recognizing this, Swamiji embarked on efforts that encouraged the people to become active participants in the rich Indian traditions. In other words, Swami Lakshmananda applied a positive response in a negative environment. His basic strategy and method was to reinforce the people's confidence in the Indian traditions and culture on one hand while focusing on practical efforts that included education, health improvement, infrastructure development, self sufficient agriculture and business cooperatives.

"Swamiji himself was a Dalit by caste. A post graduate of his times, Swamiji was considered as a godly person by the tribals of Kandhamal. Swamiji was running schools, medicals, and various other utility centers apart from an ashram in the forests of Kandhamal. In fact, Swamiji was working for the welfare of the tribals who are economically and socially much more backward than the major Dalit caste members of the district."[CLXXII]

For decades many ancient temples had gone into decay. So rather than solely building new temples he inspired the local people to renovate the ancient places of worship of their own ancestors. Temples such as Birupakshya, Anandeshwar and Jogeshwar were rebuilt and once again became thriving religious and community centers. Swami

[CLXXII] **Kandhamal Violence–Social conflict and Economic gap led to Communal hatred** Basudev Mahapatra September 15, 2008

Lakshmananda Saraswati opened numerous educational facilities including fully accredited colleges free of charge to one and all. Through his diligence and expertise every one of his schools was of the highest standard and was thus fully accredited and recognized by the government.

Cognizant of the challenges faced by Indian women, he inaugurated the Shankaracharya Kanya Ashram, a residential girls' school. In a move that highlights his far-sighted and practical approach Swamiji opened up night schools for adults and for children that had to spend their days helping their parents. Eventually he opened schools and educational centers all across the region and beyond. Outside of Kandhamal, schools were opened in the Cuttack district towns of Tulsipur and Banki. Cultural centers were opened in his home district of Angul, in the Koraput district and several other districts as well.

Recognizing the severe challenges faced by the farmers in growing and marketing their products Swamiji formed cooperatives such as the Vegetable Cooperative Society of Katinga. He taught the tribals and others who depended on slash and burn agricultural techniques to practice environmentally friendly methods of cultivation. Applying the latest scientific discoveries in higher yield hybrids and organic farming that depend on ecologically sound methodologies, Swami Lakshmananda revolutionized the agriculture of Kandhamal. The farmers soon developed a reliable base of income, revenue and resources. In fact, as a direct result of these efforts, the G. Udaygiri block of the Kandhamal district now produces the highest quality French beans in the entire State of Orissa. Swamiji also focused on the improvement of animal care and taught the people how to maximize the benefits to be gained from proper animal husbandry. Through higher quality feed, removal of parasites and other health improvement methods the animals became more productive. These efforts led to a marked increase in the literacy rates, income, productivity and self reliance of the population.

Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati was also learned in the vast knowledge of the ancient Vedanta Philosophy of India. In recognition of his learning he was awarded the title *'Vedanta Keshari'*. In honor of his selfless service he was awarded the *'Vivekananda Seva Puraskar'*.

Swamiji recognized that any ancient civilization is bound to atrophy and lead to societal imbalances. His response was to follow in the footsteps of India's past visionary leaders

such as Shankardeb of Assam, Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu of Bengal and Orissa, the founder of the Sikh religion Guru Nanak of Punjab, Kabir the leader of a synchronistic form of Islam and Hinduism, Meera Bai the Princess born Saint and Poet and other stalwarts at the forefront of India's Bhakti or devotional traditions. Swamiji established Radha Krishna temples throughout the region along with over 380 Kirtan dals or groups that perform worship through the chanting of Harinam or the Holy Names of God.[CLXXIII] Through these efforts every village within the district featured regular Satsangs or spiritual gatherings. These programs brought a sense of unity, confidence and a kind of spiritual nourishment to many people.

Some have criticized these efforts as an artificial imposition of Hinduism upon the tribal people. This view represents a complete disconnect and denial of the Indian cultural traditions and history. Such a view is based on a lack of knowledge and prejudice for it disqualifies the very essence of India's greatest luminaries from Shakardeb, Chaitanya and Gandhi. The proponents of this view manipulate the facts and ignore the many crucial dynamics involved. The obvious omission which requires a mind boggling application of illogic or the use of outright deception attempts to warp reality.

Hindus do not force require nor depend upon the literal sterilization of other traditions in order to supplant their views upon another. In other words Hindu traditions such as Kirtan-congregational singing of God's holy names become additions to the socio-religious traditions rather than artificially imposed replacements. Whereas, Christianity and Islam both, not only require, but demand the convert to reject their ancestral traditions and strip themselves of their native identity. Regardless of this reality, many in the Indian establishment compare the activism of the Hindus to that of the Christian and Islamic preachers. They attempt to portray them as alternate versions of the very same conversionary forces. Ignoring the process involved and the resulting impacts of their activities, a false image is created. Such an application of faulty logic is based upon a false premise. It reveals an irrational bias based upon a lack of knowledge. Most likely it represents an intentional effort to discredit any efforts that baffle the agendas of their preferred political forces such as the Maoist.

In other words rather than the impact of an effort, it is the individuals involved that are used to gauge the worthiness of an endeavor. Thus when a Maoist group massacres

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CLXXIII **India Insight Magazine** The Kandhamal Outrage Sudarshan Chootoroy Vol 1 Issue 16 Oct 6, 2008

underpaid police and imposes illegal taxes upon the poor it is overlooked or portrayed as an understandable act of desperation. However, when a Hindu monk like Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati sacrifices his own safety and eventually his very life in the service of humanity he is labeled as a disruptive force and a dangerous fanatic. Anywhere else in the world such active dedication is highlighted as a paragon of humanitarianism. The activities of a Native born Hindu Swami working within his own country, a mere 100 miles from his own birthplace, are however discredited and defamed. The hostility of India's current intellectual elite is such that no good deed goes unpunished while the very real crimes and terror of the Maoist and Islamist terrorists are either ignored or rationalized. Representatives of exclusivist ideologies such as Christianity, Islam or Maoism are romanticized despite their horrific track record of a history littered with the victims of their genocidal legacies. This is the current condition of India's diseased and corrosive political condition.

Modern theories regarding India's tribal condition represent an obvious deficit of precision and facts. Unproven theories that attempt to disconnect India's Hindu civilization from India's tribal culture are popular amongst many of India's political thinkers, journalists and social scientists. Their conclusions rely upon a complete lack of recognition of the anthropological reality involved. Religions based in the Eastern Mediterranean developed within the social political framework of the region. In the same way India's spiritual dynamic grew in an organic fashion within the Indian context. The two have nearly diametrically opposed histories in terms of the growth and spread of religion. In the West, new revelations were frequently followed by new wars of conquest; whereas within the Indian context, new revelations were followed by new renaissances of high civilization. Comparing the two histories as alternate versions of the same reality does not allow for an accurate understanding of India, its people nor its religions.

India's Tribes at the Foundation of Hinduism

"The leading men of an aboriginal tribe having somehow got on in the world and become landed proprietors manage to enroll themselves in one of the most distinguished castes. They usually set up as Rajputs and their first step is to consult a Brahmin to discover for them a mythical ancestor of some great Rajput Community. By the process of inter-marriages they come to be

absorbed in the fullest sense of the word and are locally accepted as high class Hindus." Imperial Gazetteer of India [CLXXIV]

Currently, academics theorize that India's Hindu people and its tribes represent opposite streams of humanity who have historically been in a state of conflict with each other. According to this view, India's tribals represent a distinct group outside of the Indian mainstream. However this theory depends upon the intentional dismissal of the historical and cultural record. The fact is, the exact opposite is true.

Before the advent of Universities, it was the very lands of the tribals that were the centers of Vedic learning. Those committed to learning, or to the total dedication of their lives to the Dharmic path, left the cities and towns. They relocated to the realms ruled over by the tribes. It was within these areas of the mountains and forests that the leading Vedic scholars, philosophers and sages lived, taught and philosophized. It was within these realms, under the benevolent protection of the tribes people, that ancient Hinduism developed and flourished. The interplay between the tribal communities and the leading Vedic/Hindu thinkers is well established throughout Indian history. Thus when Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati relocated to the tribal region of Kandhamal, rather than a Hindu version of the Christian missionary, he represented a return to the ways of his ancestors. He symbolized a rededication to Hinduism's long neglected commitment to the tribes. It was a restoration of and a return to the authentic roots of Hindu civilization.

It is no exaggeration to say that rather than its cities and towns, the foundation of India's intellectual and spiritual heritage is based in its mountains and forests. This fact alone incontrovertibly proves that India's tribal people have played a consistent and integral role at very heart of Hinduism. All it takes to comprehend this is an application of simple logic. Unarmed scholars, thinkers, philosophers and those dedicated to meditation prospered and survived in the midst of well armed bands of hunter warrior societies. The very lifestyles of such people depended upon the security and peace that allowed them to focus and contemplate the mysteries of life. They left the hustle and bustle of the cities in order to succeed in these goals. Dwelling amongst the many consummate warlike tribes required that they were recognized as either guests or as honored mentors of the community.

[CLXXIV] **Imperial Gazetteer of India** Volume I, Pg 312

Consequently the calumny of 'Christian fundamentalists-style aggressive fanatic Hindus bent upon carrying out a conversionary assault' upon the allegedly non-Hindu tribal community is baseless. Solely relying upon an absolute denial of the anthropological historical evidence, the separation between the tribes and non-tribal Hindus is nothing more than a biased opinion. The evidence denying the 'Hinduness' of India's tribes is overwhelmed by the proofs verifying the commonalities between the tribes and India's mainstream communities.

In the *'Scheduled Tribes of India,'* the Indian Government's Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission refers to the tribals adoption of the title Pashupati, or protector of the animals, "*It is a matter of joy that the tribals should adopt this good Sanskrit word Pashupati, lord of the animals."* The government had been educating the tribes in responsible forest management and recognizing their important role the tribes, voluntarily adopted the title of Pashupati, which is also a name of Lord Shiva. Only a close affiliation with the Hindu culture would allow for an understanding of the significance of the title Pashupati. The tribes play extremely significant and positive roles throughout the ancient Hindu scriptures. It is ironic that these same sources have been used to denigrate the relationship between the tribal and non-tribal communities.

A recent study of the Aboriginal problem by Dr. G. S. Ghurye (Cantab.), Head of the Department of Sociology, Bombay University, pp. 2-8, *'The Aborigines so-called and their Future'* he notes that in 1891 J.A. Baines, the Commissioner of Census considered the distinction between tribal people who were Hinduized and those that followed their tribal form of religion as futile. His research had concluded that every stratum of Indian society is more or less saturated with Animistic Conceptions.[CLXXV] In the census of 1901 Sir Herbert Risley observed that Hinduism itself was animism more or less transformed by philosophy or as magic tempered by metaphysics and his final opinion was that no sharp line of demarcation could be drawn between Hinduism and Animism as the one shaded away insensibly into the other.[CLXXVI]

Time and time again the experienced testimonials of the experts in the field have confirmed that India's tribes people and the general Hindu population share a common culture and sacred tradition.

[CLXXV] **Census of India 1891 Report** Volume I, Part I, page 158
[CLXXVI] **The People of India** second edition, pages 218, 233 and 245.

Many leading academics and scholars continue to promote an assortment of theories regarding India's tribes that are in complete contradiction with both tribal and non-tribal historical traditions. Ironically while attempting to advocate for the tribals they reject the very essence of tribal beliefs. They do not allow the tribes people to own their past and trivialize tribal views as foolish. This same kind of hostility is maintained for the Hindu traditionalists as well.

During an interview with a leading political scientist and Professor at JNU, I was startled by this outlook. He typified the modern intellectual class of elitist Indian leftist thought. In his view, *"Hinduism is doing just fine. As a civilization Hinduism does not require the help of any organization or activist."*[CLXXVII] I was startled at his conclusions. Here he was, an expert in political sciences dedicated to the separation of the religious church and the political state. Yet in all his wisdom of politics he had decided what is best for religion. Perhaps he has a legitimate view on politics but surely religious leaders have a legitimate view regarding religion and its needs. I failed to understand why he believed his opinion regarding the needs of Hindu religion trumped the views of India's Hindu religious leadership.

The Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha is a group consisting of the heads of India's leading ancient religious orders. Logic, justice, basic human decency and respect for the freedom of religion, speech and conscience demand recognition of their authority. The opinion of such a religious body is worthy of respect and is recognized as legitimate by millions of people. According to the opinion of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, Hinduism is under dire threat on many fronts. They have repeatedly clarified that activism is the need of the hour and have issued many clarion calls to the Hindus of the world. They have visibly supported the activities of such Hindu groups like the RSS and the VHP. The Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha publicly supports and validates Hindu activism as necessary and crucial for the future of Hinduism.

Again and again we find the phenomenon of people from outside the field in question pontificating as to what is best for those within the field in question. We find this same intellectual shortsightedness and misapplication of logic used repeatedly against Hindu activist efforts. Bringing such views to its logical conclusion would mean it is high time the Leftists and allegedly secular academics and journalists step aside. Let the

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[CLXXVII] **Author Interview with JNU Professor** Sept 25, 2008

Shankaracharyas, Madhvacharyas, Sants and other religious leaders teach political science at JNU and lead and moderate the media discussions on current events and politics. Let the journalists, academics and politicians step aside as the Hindu leaders provide their perspectives on current events in the editorial pages and in the TV debates.

While the non-religious elite pontificated on the Kandhamal violence, the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha publicly appealed to the Orissa government to respond in an effective manner. A month after the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, noting the lack of objectivity of the media and the failure to capture the assassins, wrote to the Chief Minister of Orissa.

"OM. Dear Chief Minister, The killing of the venerated Swami Lakshmananda has grieved Hindus all over the country. The tribals in Orissa to whom he gave succor for decades, are devastated and angry. The consequential reprisal against innocent Christian families is also unfortunate. Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, the Apex body of Hindus all over the country, comprising all the Shankaracharyas and Heads of all ancient mathas and peethas in the country, numbering more than 125 highly revered Hindu religious leaders, is deeply concerned. Violence between communities is continuing. On the one hand, Missionaries and Christian Organizations have unleashed an one-sided propaganda war against aggrieved Hindus and are pressurizing authorities against the tribals who are yet to get over their great loss; on the other hand the murderers of the Swamiji and his associates, have not yet been nabbed. The Acharya Sabha notes with distress that not only Hindus in Kandhamal region where the heinous murders took place but the vast Hindu populace in Orissa believes that the murder of the Swamiji and his associates including a woman, was the handiwork of some powerful local vested interests. There is also a strong belief that the criminals have been identified by the people locally but they are roaming freely because the law and order machinery is not keen to offend the powerful Christian minority leadership, by arresting the murderers. The Acharya Sabha requests you to take personal interest to get the criminal investigation completed quickly and to bring to book the villains, whoever they may be. It seems that special steps are required to stop the violence between communities without which the wounds will not heal easily. This will greatly help in restoring peace and order in the State. It will bring confidence in the government among the grieving Hindu populace and also other innocents in the State. Vested interests abroad will also

stop vilifying our society, Orissa State and our country. With good wishes, yours sincerely, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Convener, Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha"[CLXXVIII]

Clearly, the Hindu leadership is greatly concerned. Basic human rights demand that such a venerated group be allowed to make assessments regarding the plight of their community.

In an ironic twist of fate, today's Indian Leftists have become the modern version of India's fundamentalists of yesteryear. As acknowledged, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati was following in the footsteps of India's greatest spiritual and transformational leaders. History shows that in every instance these people faced enormous hostility, defamation and violence at the hands of the elite. Shankardeb of Assam was repeatedly attacked by the fanatic priestly class. Active during the 1500s, Shankardeb was opposed by many for his efforts to promote Krishna worship amongst the Assamese people. His life was threatened, his teachings declared as heretical and his vision and agenda severely challenged. Yet today he is officially recognized as the Father of Assamese culture and art. His contemporary Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu of Bengal was accused of polluting the Hindu religion by caste conscious Brahmins. In an effort to suppress his movement they turned the Muslim authorities against him and his followers. Meera Bai was also maltreated for her devotion to Krishna by the hierarchal establishment.

Interestingly Swami Lakshmananda's activities parallel Sankardeb's outreach to the tribal people of Assam. Just as Shankardeb was repeatedly threatened, attacked and defamed by the establishment for his work with the tribal people, today's elitists attacked Swami Lakshmananda for his service to Orissa's people. In a strange twist of fate and history we find the anti-Brahmins of today in the role of the rigid caste-ist Brahmins of yesterday. The thesis of Shankardeb, Chaitanya and others was opposed by an aggressive anti-thesis. This same anti-thesis continues to this very day. The denigration is the same, merely the actors have changed. Today's leftists are the equivalent of yesterday's fanatic priests. The same attempts to suppress India's indigenous genius continue to this very day, merely the actors have changed.

Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati represents a rare example of selfless dedication. Charismatic, dedicated, selfless and fearless he gave his life to the service of humanity.

CLXXVIII **Hindu Dharm Acharya Sabha letter to Orissa CM** September 26, 2008

Despite repeated attempts upon his life he never budged from his commitment to the upliftment of the people. His genius was to provide an all-encompassing approach that included the material and spiritual upliftment of the masses. By the establishment of education centers, infirmaries, farming cooperatives, Holy Name Choir groups, forest and cow protection communities he gave the people of Kandhamal a holistic alternative. Unlike a majority of such institutions, all of Swami Lakshmananda's institutions are free of charge. Swamiji also tackled the rampant alcoholism amongst the tribals and spearheaded the anti-liquor movement. Thousands of people gave up alcohol including the entire population of Katinga village. It is relevant to mention in this regard that media claims of alcohol enraged followers of Swami Lakshmananda on the rampage appear to be based upon blatant propaganda. As the leader of the anti-liquor movement Swamiji's dedicated followers do not drink.

Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati famously had the human touch. He never positioned himself as the almighty Guru or leader but, according to first hand testimony acted as a personal guide, friend and advisor to anyone who approached him. He was beloved as an elder, a grandfather, a sage, a seer and a compassionate advocate for the poor. It was not words alone that bear this out. When confronted with legal issues involving permits, lawsuits or any other official business, most tribal people feel highly intimidated and overwhelmed. Despite his very busy schedule and role as a spiritual leader, Swami Lakshmananda would personally accompany the intimidated and unsophisticated person to the police station, government office etc. His kindness, dedication and attention to details earned him the love, respect, support and admiration of thousands upon thousands of people. The media and others have presented shallow misrepresentations of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati as the front-man for one specific organization. Such a view is beyond being merely inaccurate. They are unjust and blatantly false. There was indeed one organization active in Kandhamal and that organization was the Swami himself. The man was the mission.

To Kill Hope

"The Swami, who had established his ashram in Kandhamal in the late 1960s, was deeply venerated as an incarnation of Parashuram (Vishnu) by the Kandhas. The anger over his death fuelled a clash between communities which, quite predictably, translated into sectarian conflict."
Indian Journalist Swapan Dasgupta

From the very beginning of recorded history, a strange phenomenon has plagued humankind. Women, the gentler sex, the better half, weaker physically yet stronger psychologically, have been frequent targets of sexual aggression. The vulnerability of women is a gauge of the civilized condition of a people. A society in which women prosper and move freely, assured of their security represents an evolved society. The reverse of this represents a stunted and barbaric condition. Attacks upon women, both psychological and physical through oppressive and repressive social codes and physically through rape and sexual exploitation are frequent and common place. However the strange phenomenon is the frequent ability for some to blame the victims. '*Oh she asked for it*.' Or '*Did you see how she was dressed?*' Basically such entropic responses fault the victim and ignore the actual violator's abusive behavior. Fortunately such dysfunctional outlooks have become less common and are no longer tolerated. There is no excuse for rape or murder. Yet in India there is always an excuse for murder and massacre and India's leftists are eveready to provide it. This inhumane and dysfunctional outlook is prevalent amongst India's media and academic communities.

As terrorists massacre thousands of Indian citizens, the media parrots the terrorist propaganda justifying their brutality. The demolition of an old mosque or the political journeys (Rathayatra) of a Hindu politician are bandied about as justifications for mass murder. As police do their jobs and arrest or kill suspects, at times Maoist or Islamists, the media sullies their response as police brutality. Even worse, the media will rationalize the terrorists' action as an understandable response to police harassment.

During the aftermath of Delhi's September 2008 terror attacks, the Indian news channels became direct conduits for the propaganda rationalizing mass murder. Such aiding and abetting of terror and mayhem bespeaks of a dark conspiracy connecting the actual terrorists with the powers controlling the media. In India the freedom of the press has been perverted into a forum for conflict and chaos. Its agenda appears to be the denigration of Nationalism and the destruction of the very idea of an Indic based Indian Nation. This is the voice of those who rationalize the murder of an 82 year old social activist, a school teacher and others at a girls' school. Rather than blame those who crossed the line of decency and legality for perpetrating the massacre, the so-called experts blame the victims. *'They asked for it!'* In other words the alleged guardians of secularism and plurality are claiming that they deserved to be murdered merely for being who they are.

This final and successful attempt upon the life of Lakshmananda Saraswati was not the first. In fact he was attacked as early as 1969 within the first year of his arrival in the Kandhamal region. At the time he was attacked by a Christian mob led by a Christian Father of a local church at Rupagaon near Chakapada. His vocal opposition to fraudulent conversions that relied upon inducements such as free medical treatment and education for new converts had irked the Christians. He was attacked once again in early 1970 by cow traffickers and beef traders near Tentuliapada in the Tikabali block of Kandhamal district.

This attack led to a catharsis and turning point in the life of the Swamiji. Swami Lakshmananda spoke of this in an early 2008 interview. *"I was attacked on January 26, 1970. I had to hide myself in a school for over three hours. Nobody came to my rescue. Then I thought that so many Hindus were there as I was attacked but no one came forward at the time of the attack. It was then that I vowed to reignite the light of conviction in the hearts of the Hindus. I established Srimad Bhagavat classes, Radha Krishna deities and opened evening prayer and choir centers. I taught the people how to farm properly, how to worship Mother Cow and how to protect the forests."*

It was from that day on that Swami Lakshmananda became a staunch and dedicated activist. Recognizing the tribals' unique heritage and culture, Swamiji organized and sponsored many restoration ceremonies of the Kandha tribal Goddess, Mother Earth Dharani Penu. He conducted several Rathayatras-pilgrimage processions that travelled from village to village creating awareness and thus stimulated a re-awakening interest in tribal art, dance, music and culture. His efforts brought about a resurgence in tribal culture. This resurgence created a sense of self-worth and self reliance amongst the Kandhas.

Swamiji's efforts were, however, quickly recognized as an obstacle to the Christian groups active in the region. Response was quick. Beginning in 1969 with the attack led by A Christian Pastor to the 1970 attack by Cow slaughter gangs and beef traders, Swamiji became a frequent target.

In 1978 Swami Lakshmananda was attacked in Batingia village as he was engaged in singing with a Holy Name choir. In 1981 an ambush attempt was made by armed local Christians as he attended a fire ritual-Yajna near Katinga village. Intervention of the local villagers and the police foiled the attack as the Swami was safely escorted from the

area. In 1999 Christians attacked him in Firingia as he gave a public lecture on the Hindu scriptures. In 2002 as he journeyed to attend a fire ritual in Kalinga village he was ambushed and pelted with stones. Injured with a blow to the head the Swami was hospitalized.

Then on December 24, 2007 he was brutally attacked near Darsingbadi village in Kandhamal district. A mob of over 200 people attacked Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and his party consisting of the driver Naresh Kanhar, Private Security Officer (PSO) Bhuvaneshwar Jani and personal assistant Kishore (Baba) Pradhan. Blocking the road with the use of a bus, the armed mob stopped Swamiji's jeep, and then quickly proceeded to attack the vehicle. Smashing through the windows, the assailants inflicted severe injuries upon Swamij's party. Barely escaping with their lives, they fled to the nearest police station and were thereupon taken by ambulance and hospitalized. At first the victims were kept at the local hospital, however the situation became so untenable that Swamiji was shifted to a Cuttack hospital, outside of the Kandhamal district. Yet even in far off Cuttack he was not safe as round the clock security was placed outside his hospital room. The Kandhas noted that this attack, like all the previous, was the handiwork of the Pana Christians. Violence erupted across Kandhamal as the Swami was brought to the Cuttack Medical College Hospital.

Mysteriously, the news media published the exact location of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati including his hospital room number. Four days after the attack, the Pioneer newspaper, an Orissa State wide Bhuvaneshwar based publication, revealed, "*Swami, who is undergoing treatment at the SBC Medical College Hospital in Cuttack…looked feeble, but well, lying on his bed in cabin 3 at the hospitals surgery department.*"[CLXXIX] As violent riots engulfed the region, the media storm began.

Bandhs, Arches and Prejudice

The events surrounding the December 24th, 2007 attack on Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati play a significant role in the overall situation leading up to the August 23, 2008 assassination. Rather than a separate incident it represents recent phase of an ongoing conflagration. It has its roots in the demands of the Christian Panas of Kandhamal for S.T. (Scheduled Tribe) status. As the legal wrangling over the issue continued, the political agitation intensified.

CLXXIX **Pioneer News** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa December 29, 2008

On November 27, 2007, Kandha organizations sent out a call for a Bandh. In a December 18th letter to the President of the Phulbani Business Organization the business community was apprised of the dates and times of the Bandh. It was entitled: *'Celebration of Kandhamal Bandh'.* Bandh refers to a type of boycott or strike. It literally means *'Stop'* because it puts a stop to all functioning of business and government in a show of solidarity. The problem arises when not everyone agrees with the motivation behind the Bandh and refuses to comply. Some people respond with compliance to avoid the hassle of being attacked or harassed. Others comply out of sympathy with the cause. The Bandh is basically a form of protest developed by a disempowered majority. Having roots in the Indian Freedom struggle it became an effective response by which the Indian masses could resist British domination. The effectiveness of a Bandh depends upon the local political environment.

Critics of the Kandha Bandh have argued that the timing had been deliberately tied to the Pana's Christmas celebrations. They point to this as evidence of the impropriety of the Kandhas, the Swami and their supporters. Such a conclusion discounts the very essence of a political Bandh. The Bandh is a process by which social pressures are applied upon the authorities and the opposition. It is also a type of an awareness campaign highlighting the demands of the Bandh organizers. Without inconveniencing the powers that be, the Bandh is worthless. The lack of justice and the continued legal and illegal assaults upon the tribal community drove the Kandhas to demand change. The Bandh was organized in order to highlight these demands and to pressure the authorities into doing their job. Since the Christmas season is important to both the social and economic functionality of the Christian Panas, the Kandhas intentionally chose the holiday as their day of protest. Even then, Christmas day itself was the Bandh day, a day when the Christian community would be least affected.

The Bandh declaration was issued in the name of the Kandhamal Zilla Kui Samaj (KZKS) Coordination Committee. Speaking to media, the convener of the KZKS Lambodar Kanhar said their Bandh call would not attempt to disrupt Christmas celebrations. Only two wheelers and medical vehicles will be allowed to travel in the district. The organization would also not allow any shops other than medicine stores to open their shutters during the Bandh period.[CLXXX]

[CLXXX] **The Hindu** '*Tension grips Kandhamal district*' Berhampur, Orissa December 25, 2007

Within days of the Kandha Bandh declaration, the Christian Panas decided to erect a grand Christian Arch upon the Kandha's sacred Durga Puja Mandap site. Earlier, the Christian had set up their Christian arches within their church grounds but, starting in December 2006, unexpectedly the Christian Panas began using traditional Kandha sites. The Kandhas became agitated. *"Why are they doing this? Let the Christians celebrate and install their arch in their own area. Why on the exact spot we hold our rituals? Why here?"*

The Christians claimed that they had applied and received a permit to erect the arch. However when asked to show their permit by the Justice on Trial fact finding mission, the Christians displayed a permit for the use of loudspeakers. No permit had been given for either an arch nor for the massive tent they had erected.[CLXXXI]

Prior to the Bandh, Kandha groups such as Kui Samanya Samiti held meetings throughout Kandhamal in order to stimulate mass support for the Bandh declaration. Fiery speeches were given reminding the people of the injustices and dangers of Christian Pana demands and of the ongoing land theft. Lack of support from the administration, failure of due process, false caste certificates, and loss of access to their constitutional rights and lack of political representation all led to the discontentment. Thousands of Kandhas participated. The demands of the Bandh were as follows:

1. Clarification of the amended Presidential notification of Kui in the list of Scheduled Tribes.
2. Deregistration of the NGO, World Vision which claims to work for the Pana's Kui Samaj efforts to be registered as a Scheduled Tribe
3. Action against Minister Padmanaba Behera for suggesting that "World Vision supports the welfare of the Kui Samaj which is a Scheduled Tribe' and who used the State machinery to repress an enquiry against current member of Rajya Sabha Radha Kant Nayak IAS (Ret). Nayak has been leading efforts to have the Christian Panas listed as S.T. Scheduled Tribes.
4. Dismissal of John Naik who has usurped a Government post using S.C certificates
5. Legal action against anyone using forged S.T. certificates
6. Restoration of tribal lands 'according with the legal judgments made in that regard'.

CLXXXI **Justice on Trial Kandhamal Fact Finding Mission** Kandhamal Root Cause, February 7, 2008

As for the Christian Pana side of the equation, rumors of violent threats from the Kandhas were making the rounds. Panas reported that posters were seen with threatening phrases such as, *"Kandhamal is for tribals only!"* and, *"No one can live in Kandhamal except tribals!"* In response, Christian Pana community leaders and Pastors Umesh Nayak, Simon Sagar and Pitabash Digal filed a complaint with the Police on December 23, 2007. They informed the sub-collector of the threats against the Christians that allegedly appeared on Bandh posters. However, upon investigation no threatening posters were ever seen or found. The complainants admitted that they had not actually seen any such posters but rather had heard of the threatening posters from others who claimed to have seen them.[CLXXXII]

Despite these fears the Panas felt safe enough to erect a Christmas arch on a Kandha traditional worship site within the Hindu tribal majority section of Brahmanigaon town. Such an act by an allegedly fearful minority group can only be explained as a conscious attempt to vitiate the mood and ratchet up tensions. Due to the Christian Panas' ongoing demands and the Kandha's Bandh declaration, the overall sense of mistrust between the two communities was running high. It was an ill-advised move for the Christians to suddenly install a major Christmas arch at that time and location.

In hindsight, it appears that the Christian Pana move was an intentional act designed to agitate the Kandha. It was a direct response and countermove against the Bandh declaration and its demands. Fearing that Kandha demands would be heard and acted upon, the Christian Panas intentionally changed the political focus. The Christians had flouted the law and used their loudspeaker permits to build a Christmas arch and tent in a Kandha area. As the media regurgitated theories blaming Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati or the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) it ignored the overt and disruptive actions of the Christian Pana leadership. Whoever pushed for the construction of the arch in Brahminigaon is directly responsible for the violence that followed. This same conclusion was made by the Justice On Trial Fact Finding Mission Committee, *"If the gate had not forcefully been erected by the Christians, then the (violent) incidents of 23rd December would not have happened, thousands of houses would not have been set on fire and hundreds of thousands of Kandhamal's people would not have been put through terror, filled*

CLXXXII **Ibid.**

with doubts regarding their safety nor have developed such intense hatred against each other." [CLXXXIII]

Unfortunately this basic fact has been completely ignored by not only the irresponsible and biased media, but by Indian Government bodies such as the National Commission of Minorities (NCM) as well. From the evidence it is clear that the NCM abused its mandate. The NCM actually contributed to the violence against the very minorities it has been commissioned to protect. Despite recognizing that, *'the arch was built upon the location used by the Hindus'*, the NCM report ignored the ramifications of the act.[CLXXXIV]

The report then attempts to blame the entire upheaval upon Swami Lakshmananda. As if claiming some meta-physical abilities, the NCM presents an alleged insight into the very workings of the mindset of Swamiji, *"The very fact that the Swami was on his way to Brahmanigaon to raise the 'morale of the majority community' is indicative of his desire to exacerbate community tensions."*[CLXXXV]

It is this kind of reporting that has added much confusion to the situation because it ignores the actual circumstances leading up to the violence. The NCM was fully cognizant that the permits involved allowed for loudspeakers and nothing else. Despite having full knowledge that the Christmas arch was not built with the required permits, the NCM misleads by applying the use of nebulous wordplay in this regard. The phrase *"The District Administration confirmed the grant of permission"* is placed after the words *'loudspeakers'* and juxtaposed in such a way as to fool the reader into the false belief that the '*permission*' had been given for the Christmas arch. The NCM than portrays the Kandha response to the arch as unlawful. "…*a group of 150-200 people started demanding that the arch be removed."* So here we have communal tensions in real time, with over 150 angry people protesting the Christian Pana's illegal arch. Yet not once does the NCM point out the obvious fact that the arch exasperated communal tensions. Ignoring the true source of tension, the NCM accuses Swami Lakshmananda of 'exacerbating tensions' for merely travelling to the area.

The fact is Swamiji was attending a scheduled fire ritual that had been scheduled beforehand. The organized ambush that met him on his way could only have been arranged with the foreknowledge of his travel plans. Since the Yajna-fire ritual was a

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CLXXXIII **Justice on Trial Kandhamal Fact Finding Mission** Kandhamal Root Cause, February 7, 2008
CLXXXIV **National Commission on Minorities** pg 4 Kandhamal Report
CLXXXV **Ibid.** pg5

publicized event, it was easy enough for the ambush to be coordinated effectively. The extreme bias by the NCM and the media is quite obvious. For if Swamiji had indeed gone to boost the morale of a people, during a time of extreme provocation, it cannot be considered an improper act. The concept of an elderly leader, dedicated to the advocacy of an oppressed people, visiting a scene of crisis is not exactly an unheard of response. Actually it is an act required of any leader throughout history. Not a tragedy has gone by without the visit from a leader. When a leader fails to visit, console and comfort an aggrieved community, he or she forfeits their authority.

Confirmation that the Swami had indeed been planning to attend a pre-scheduled Yajna is provided by the Indian Christian leader John Dayal's White Paper. In it he wrote that the Pana Christians attempted to have the Police ban the Swami from performing the fire ritual.[CLXXXVI] The Director of the Pana lobbyist group Ambedkar Banika Sangh of Brahmanigaon sent a fax to the Phulbani S.P. (Superintendent of Police) and later met with the S.P. of Brahmanigaon. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Swami Lakshmananda's plans to attend the fire yanja ritual. This is undeniable verification of the Christian's foreknowledge of Swami Lakshmananda's itinerary. It also proves that, rather than a spur of the moment decision to bolster the moral of the combatants, the Swami's visit had been planned previous to the Brahmanigaon violence. This signifies that failing in their attempt to use the police, the Christians took the law into their hands. By attacking Swamiji they effectively stopped him from attending the function. The NCM's misrepresented the Swami's actions as an effort to '*exacerbate tensions'*. This, combined with their whitewash of the many well documented cases of Christian Pana aggression, discredits the reliability of the National Minority Commission's Kandhamal report.

Claims that Swami Lakshmananda had gone to stir up tensions are not based on the facts. In fact, the evidence suggests that Swamiji was caught unawares. Once he realized the intensity of the violence and intentions of the Christian Panas, he acted in accordance with the Administration's ongoing law and order restoration efforts. At the time of his planned visit to Brahmanigaon, the violence had not begun. Once the violence began, Swamiji intentionally avoided becoming a focus for further violence. Rather than continuing to Brahmanigaon village, he left the entire district and remained in Cuttack.

[CLXXXVI] **White Paper on Kandhamal** John Dayal

During the Swami's interview with the NHRC (National Human Rights Commission) he was asked as to why he did not return to his Chakapad, Kandhamal home. He replied that as the tension continued, he preferred not to go. *"If I am attacked upon my return, the miscreants who want to create disturbances will take mileage out of it."* [CLXXXVII] The Swamiji elaborated, *"I avoided returning to Kandhamal because the attack upon me was not taken kindly by the public. My presence might have upset them further. Hence I chose to remain away from the area for some time. Even though, all is safe now at my Ashram due to the team of police personnel on guard."*[CLXXXVIII] Not wanting to complicate matters, the Swami remained in Cuttack for nearly an entire month. The NCM never mentions any of these facts. Rather they attribute the exact opposite mentality upon the Swami. Interestingly the Global Council of Indian Christians strongly criticized the NCM for refusing to visit violence-affected areas *'due to discomfort with the terrain.'*

The media and many leading Indian politicians and commentators have refused to present the facts and instead created a fabricated reality based solely upon their prejudices. Refusing to recognize Swami Lakshmananda as a genuine leader, attempts have been made to belittle his stature. Despite the fact that thousands of Kandhas have openly accepted the Swami as a mentor and guide, the media continues to present him as an outsider. By the repeated use of the phrase '*VHP leader*' an effort has been made to disconnect him from any legitimate role in Kandhamal. His identification as a VHP leader was not the basis of his popularity. Rather it was his dedication and success that attracted the VHP to him. The VHP is active throughout India and the world. Yet the presence of various VHP leaders has not automatically translated into massive movements as seen in Kandhamal. The VHP is an organization but it depends upon the effectiveness of its members to succeed. So rather than being a VHP agent, Swami Lakshmananda was a dynamic social activist and humanitarian that happened to be a member of the VHP. Swamiji's personal leadership, genius and wisdom inspired thousands in Kandhamal and millions of Orissa and India. The very fact that he was assassinated proves that it was the personality of Swamiji, the individual, which was at the center of it all. This is self evident when we look at the programs instituted by the Swami. These were his ideas, his projects and thus his personal stamp was on everything. The VHP does not advocate any particular form of Hinduism. Yet in Kandhamal we see that Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati promoted a renaissance of

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[CLXXXVII] **Pioneer News Service** January 12, 2008
[CLXXXVIII] **Times of India** January 11, 2008

Vaishnava practices. This is indicative of his independent role as an Acharya (Spiritual Leader) or Guru in line with the ancient Indian traditions. For if the Swami were merely an activist for the overall VHP agenda, a replacement would have been easy; his assassination would have been pointless.

Violations and Violence

Tension swept through Kandhamal. Following months of the Christians' intensified campaign for Scheduled Tribe (S.T.) status, the Kandhas responded with a Bandh and a list of demands countering the Christian Pana campaign. The Christians responded by erecting a Christmas arch and a massive tent on the location of the Kandha's traditional Durga worship mandap. The Panas exacerbated tensions by erecting the arch within the Hindu Kandha part of Brahmanigaon town. Memories of the 1994 Pana-Kandha riots and rumors of life threatening posters brought consternation to many Christian Panas. Despite this, the Christian leadership organized the construction of the Christmas arch and tent exactly where it would do the most harm. Responding to the Kandha complaints against the arch, the Superintendant of Police (S.P.) intervened. In an effort at compromise, the S.P. offered the Christian Panas the use of a nearby area acceptable to the Kandhas. The Christians refused to budge and instead warned the police to be ready for trouble.

Kandhamal Congress Party leader Rambisi Digal stated that the timing of the Bandh was a great inconvenience to the Pana Christians. According to his testimony the Hindu shop owners had closed their shops on December 23rd, a full two days before the official start of the Bandh. The local merchants had voluntarily closed their shops in protest of the Christians' Christmas arch. Rambisi Digal, Vice President of the Kandhamal District Congress Party Committee and a Pana, held that traditionally the Kandhas were like the Kings of Kandhamal while the Panas fulfilled the role as the Ministers. According to him, all would be well if the politicians kept out of the affairs of the two communities. Regarding the December 2007 trouble, Rambisi Digal explained, *"As Christmas day was approaching and the people of the Christian community, from far and near places, were depending on the Brahmanigaon Market, they insisted that the shops be opened. A clash ensued between the two communities."*

The Brahmanigaon Market clash represented the culmination of the long term Christian Pana action plan. The tension was transformed into political violence through a process

of intentional provocation. The erection of the Christmas arch, the Kandha's subsequent refusal to open their shops followed by Christian Pana demands to open the market led to the violence. By that afternoon 3 Hindu owned shops and 1 Hotel/Restaurant and were set ablaze. P.C. Dogra, Indian Police Service (Ret) and President of the Forum on Integrated National Security, reported that the Christians set the fires in the presence of the police and District magistrate. Corroborating the testimony of Swami Lakshmananda and the eye-witness statements of the members of the Kandha Janajati Suraksha Manch, P.C. Dogra identified the targeted hotel and shops as being owned by Kandha tribes people.[CLXXXIX]

The next morning, at approximately 8:30 AM December, 24th a large group of Kandhas gathered. Six of the Kandhas, armed with firearms, began shooting blanks into the air. The group then proceeded towards the site of the Pana's Christmas arch. Upon arrival, the mob attacked and destroyed the arch and tent. An icon of Mother Mary was also demolished. Stone throwing between the two parties ensued as they attacked each other in a state of mob fury.

Hearing about the outbreak of violence, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati felt his presence was needed more than ever. The police advised against it but the Swami was determined to attend the planned fire ritual and get a firsthand account of events. It was on the way to Brahmanigaon Village that at around 2 PM, December 24th, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati's party was suddenly ambushed near Darsingbadi, Kandhamal. According to the Swami's statement, *"I got the information that there is commotion and clash between both the communities and some Hindus have been injured and shops of Hindus were burnt on 23rd of December. So, I went to visit the place on the 24th December, 2007, however, I was obstructed at Dasingbadi village. I was moving with my vehicle. We were five persons including my driver and security-man. At Dasingbadi bus stop a bus was standing across the road covering the entire space. So my vehicle had to stop there. As soon as my vehicle stopped, number of persons having arms in their hands started attacking my vehicle. I was sitting inside the vehicle and my driver locked the doors. Miscreants wanted to drag me out of the vehicle but driver, security man and others sitting in my vehicle resisted tooth and nail. As a result of which miscreants could not do much harm to me except a few injuries through broken glass pieces but my fellowmen were injured. Driver whisked away the vehicle to save our life but one person remained outside the vehicle who has been brutally beaten by the*

CLXXXIX **Violence in Kandhamal-The other side of the story** P.C. Dogra

miscreants. Later he was admitted to the M.K.C.G. Medical College Hospital, Berhampur in a critical condition. The Christians have been targeting me since the 1970s. In the meantime 8 attacks or attempts have been made on my life by Christians but due to God's grace I have narrowly escaped every time. Only once miscreants hit my forehead, and thus causing me injury."[CXC]

Escaping his attackers, the Swami and associates filed a FIR (First Incident Report) at the Darsingbadi Police Station. FIR # 83/07 was lodged by Mr. Bhuvaneshwar Jain, Personal Secretary of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati.

Congress Party Leaders and MBA (Members of the Legislative Assembly), Rambisi Digal and Ajayant Pradhan alleged that the bus used to ambush the Swami was owned by political rival BJD Party MLA and Pana Christian leader, Sugrib Singh. Media reports stated that MLA Sugrib Singh's brother was the driver of the bus. However, according to Swami Lakshmananda, the mastermind behind the attack was none other than Rajya Sabha member R.K. Nayak. The location of the attack also happened to be the very same R.K. Nayak's hometown. News of the attack was broadcast widely throughout Orissa and was a featured story on every news channel. Swami Lakshmananda never made it to Brahmanigaon. Kandhamal erupted in flames and violence.

Backlash

"The Swami was deeply venerated as an incarnation of Parashuram by the Kandhas tribes. Mr. Suresh Chandra Saur, PA, ITDA (Project Administrator, Integrated Tribal Development Agency, Govt. of Orissa) remarked that the attack on Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati was the immediate provocation for the tribals to resort to Rasta Rokoat Baliguda and the torching of 6 Churches at Barkhama on 24th December evening."[CXCI]

As news of the attack spread throughout the region, outrage grew. All schools and colleges remained closed. Brahmanigaon exploded as the Kandhas began burning Christian Pana homes, Churches and other institutions. News of the attack upon Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati had united the Kandhas in fury. The defiant act of installing the Christmas arch and Pandal tent on the Kandha's Durga Puja mandap coupled with the news of the attack on Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati evoked the legendary

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CXC **Justice on Trial Kandhamal Fact Finding Mission** Kandhamal Root Cause, February 7, 2008
CXCI **Ibid.**

warrior spirit of the Kandhas. Having no faith in the police, who had failed to enforce the many court orders and who stood by as the Christian Panas torched Kandha businesses, the Kandha leaders took the only path left to them; the war path. Their mentor and religious leader, Swamiji had been attacked multiple times and yet not one person had ever been arrested for the crimes. The Police refused to do their job in enforcing the law. Reaction to the attack spread throughout the State. A 4 hour Bandh in protest of the attack was issued. Protestors blocked traffic and trains in Cuttack, the Capital Bhuvaneshwar, Balasore and Bhadrak. Tires were set on fire and placed on the main roads as groups of protestors brought the region to a halt. Adding fuel to the fire, Archbishop Cheenath Raphael made a public statement denying the attack had ever taken place.

According to the press, the Archbishop declared that *"All the reports on the attacks on Swami Lakshmananda are baseless."*[CXCII] He made this statement as the Swami and his three companions were lying wounded and hospitalized. Word also spread that one of the Swami's students had been abducted. Clashes broke out in various locations consisting mostly of rock-throwing and according to the Police several incidents involving the use of homemade guns. By the early afternoon of December 24th, four people had been wounded with two suffering of bullet injuries, including Swamiji and his 3 followers that had been attacked, 8 Hindus had been wounded. The first day also saw the death of a Kandha man. Justice on Trial, NCM (National Commission for Minorities) and John Dayal's White Paper all verify that no Christians were injured that first day. The four wounded were Hindu Kandhas. Thus on the first day of the December 2007 cycle of violence, Hindus were the primary victims.

Earlier that morning, as the Kandhas had destroyed the arch, 20 shops were looted and some others burnt. As John Dayal of the AICC (All India Christian Council) asserted to the Times News Network, the Pana Christians were attacking the Hindus out of a sense of vengeance. At around midday, on December 24th, an elderly Kandha man named Khageshwar Mallick succumbed to this rage as he was brutally stoned to death by a mob of rock throwing Christians. There was also a report of a Kandha boy dying after being hit in the head. However this may have been a rumor based upon the death of Khageshwar Mallik. Either way these reports further enraged the Kandhas. Two thatched huts that doubled as Christian prayer halls were targeted in response. 10

[CXCII] **Pioneer News Service** December 27, 2007

Christian homes were also burnt and 11 people injured. The Christians set a government office on fire. Kandhas also torched a police station in Firingua block.

In a move that added more chaos to the scene, the Christian Panas declared a 36 hour Bandh to press for their demands for S.T. (Scheduled Tribe) status. 3 Hindu temples were attacked as well in Jaleshpatta, Baliguda and Tumundibandh.[CXCIII] 4 houses were damaged in Barakhama and 6 more attacked in Jaleshpatta. In response, the Orissa State Government deployed 27 Police battalions to restore the peace. S.P. (Superintendant of Police) from the neighboring districts of Boudh and Gajapati, along with 20 additional officers, was sent to assist in riot control efforts. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik directed senior bureaucrat Arbind Behera, a Pana and former District Collector for Kandhamal and Boudh along with Chairman of IDCO Ashok Kumar Meena, the former Collector of Phuibani and Boudh to the Kandhamal Peace effort. But peace did not come. The Christians continued their attacks as a Revenue Dept office building was set on fire in the Khajuripada Township. When asked as to the significance of such a target, an unnamed official indicated that he suspected the Panas were possibly attempting to destroy records that could be used against them.

On Christmas day, a gruesome incident took place. Despite the media's image of emotionally traumatized Christians denied their festive Christmas season by virulent Hindu bigots, some Christians used Christmas day to burn alive a 16 year old Hindu boy. He was named Bhikari Sethi. He was captured, tortured and then set ablaze by a group of Pana Christians. He had been left to die but was eventually rescued and hospitalized. He recounted the horrific incident, *"It was around 12 noon when I came to take bath at a small pond nearby. Suddenly I saw a group of men charging down at me. I was at a loss, not quite knowing what to do. I froze and looked at them, but when they got closer, I started running. These people were looking very murderous. I was running breathlessly."* The young victim Sethi told the Times of India from his hospital bed. *"After some distance they caught up with me. One of them grabbed my neck, another poured petrol on me. One person then lit a matchstick. I was screaming for help. They were laughing. Soon some villagers came running, but by then my body was on fire."* While reporting on the incident, the Times of India never revealed the fact that the attackers were Christians. Following a sinister pattern, the Times of India highlights the identity of Christian victims while it either fails to report upon Hindu victims or misrepresents them as Christians. In this case the

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CXCIII **Pioneer News Service** Bhuvaneshwar,Orissa edition December 27, 2007

Times of India never mentions the victim as a Hindu and refers to the attackers as religious zealots. In Indian media-speak, religious zealots refers to Hindu activists such as the VHP. Thus by referring to the attackers as religious zealots, without identifying them, Times of India created the perception that yet another Christian had been victimized by fanatic Hindus. It is as if in an attempt was made to present the victims as the aggressors and the perpetrators of the violence as the victims.

Bhikari Sethi barely survived the Christmas day attack. The son of Saibani and Dandapani Sethi, Bhikari was a young Hindu from Ladigaon village in Ganjam district. He had been living in Brahmanigaon for the last 6 years and worked in his father's tailor shop. He was in Class 10 at Government High School. As for the culprits who attempted to kill him? According to Bhikari Sethi, it was a group of 7 to 8 people led by a Pana Christian named Thomas Naik. The Pioneer Newspaper, on 12/28/07 stated that Thomas Naik had been a primary instigator of many disturbing incidents throughout the Brahmanigaon area.

Yet C.M. Patnaik denied that things were as desperate. *"There has only been 1 death and we have arrested about 24 people. The situation is fast becoming normal. I have reviewed the situation thoroughly. Peace Committees have been formed."* Despite the State's official claims, the District administration refuted claims that peace was returning to the district. Revenue Division Commissioner Satyabrata Sahu told the Press that 2 Police outposts and a police vehicle were set on fire. On December 26 and 27th 4 more churches were burnt and 132 homes destroyed. Kandha protestors, demanding the resignation of Orissa's Steel and Mines Minister Padmanabha Behera were pelted with stones by Christian Pana mobs. Furious Kandhas than attacked the homes of the Minister in response. Three more makeshift prayer halls were ransacked in Baliguda and 3 more in the Nuagon block of Kandhamal. By this time the violence had reached the District Headquarters of Phulbani and also Tikabali. A Police station and a police outpost were set ablaze, along with several jeeps. Policemen who went to Darsingbadi, Phiringia and Chakapada blocks were stopped by hundreds of protestors. Odhisha International Center Chairman Paresh Nayak urged Chief Minister Patnaik to take stronger measures to stop the crisis. *"The activities of the missionaries in Phulbani have crossed all limits,"* he stated.

A large number of Hindu Kandha men, women, children and seniors had lost their homes to arson and fled to relief camps. Many of these victims gave on-camera

testimonials. The press, despite having access to these first hand reports, ignored their testimonials refusing to broadcast their plight. These testimonials were from Kandhas encamped in a relief camp near Merikote village in Ganjam. The violence was so intense they were forced to flee the Kandhamal district entirely. Many Kandhamal safe havens were unavailable to Hindus. In the video, a Kandha woman Sasmita Swain recalled that the Pana Christians were attacking the Hindus without provocation. The police provided no security. Thousands of Hindus had been forced to desert their villages in fear of their lives.[CXCIV]

By the fourth day, 3 people had died and hundreds were injured. Included in the casualties were several police officers. S.P. of Gajapati A. N. Sinha was severely injured in the head by a stone. If the conflict had been confined to ethnic hostilities, the violence may have settled down quickly. However an unexpected and fierce attack upon the Brahmanigaon police station completely altered the very nature of the conflict.

Nexus of Violence

December 27th 2008, was a major turning point in the Kandhamal conflict. Police were stunned as they barely survived a well organized attack upon the Brahmanigaon Police Station. Prepared to deal with rioting citizenry, the Police were completely unprepared to deal with an attack of such a fierce and organized nature. It suggested a far more dangerous scenario than previously assumed. Hundreds of armed assailants had launched a sudden attack upon the station. A furious gun battle ensued lasting hours. As the assault began the police were confident of dispersing the crowd with the firing of blanks and tear gas. The police quickly realized that normal procedures were useless as the attackers opened up with automatic weapons fire. S.P. of Kandhamal, S. Bhol was taken aback by the skill and intensity of the attack. Suspicion immediately fell upon the Maoists. *"This can only be done by professional shooters. We suspect that the Maoists are trying to take advantage of the situation and were involved in the raid on the police station. 2 more platoons had therefore been sent to the area. We succeeded in repulsing the attack only after a unit of Special Operations Group engaged in anti-extremist activities reached the spot."*

These were not mere disgruntled locals. In fact, if not for the intervention of the Special Forces the police would not have survived the attack. An IPS (Indian Police Service) officer and Constable were wounded in the gun battle. As for the attackers,

CXCIV **Pioneer News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa January 9,2008

eyewitnesses reported seeing about 10 of them gunned down. Yet after the battle only 4 bodies were recovered. This was another indicator of Maoist involvement for the Maoist tactics include the removal of their casualties in order to hamper any investigative efforts. However, in this case, the attackers were unable to retrieve one of their cadres. Afterwards, the Police reported that four of the attackers had been killed. They quickly identified three of the attackers as local Pana Christians yet the fourth man was unknown. *"The person killed in the police firing is yet to be identified. He was most likely an outsider and we suspect him to be an extremist."* After investigation, the man was later identified as a Christian convert from another part of Orissa.

Superintendent of Police Amitendra Nath Sinha, IPS, who barely escaped the attack at Brahmanigaon, spoke of his experiences and the involvement of the Maoists. *"On December 28, I was at Brahmanigaon accompanied by 40 constables of OSAP and SOG. We saw that the attackers suddenly marched towards us. They set the Hindu houses afire. We warned them and fired tear gas shells. But they were undeterred. Suddenly, a member of them came forward, took position and started firing bullet on the police like a trained Maoist. That bullet passed by my right side and hurt a constable. Then the attackers fired 100 rounds of bullets and used automatic rifles for that. It astonished me because on the basis of my observation in police service, I can say that it was not the work of mere rioters. However, our bullets killed one of them. Later we came to know that the deceased gunner was an outsider; he wore a white scarf on his head. But we were further surprised when the attacker's dead body was taken away by his associates. The manner in which it was taken is nowhere seen except in Maoist circle."* [cxcv] Shri Sinha's statement is corroborated by an incident that occurred in Brahmanigaon on December 31, in which 12 SLR guns, eight AK-47 rifles, 15 landmines and five bombs were seized by the police. How did such sophisticated and expensive weaponry end up in the small inconsequential town of Brahmanigaon? And what were the Pana Christians doing with such an arms cache?

In the aftermath of the attack, one of the assailants was captured, wounded but alive. He was recognized as a local Pana Christian. During his interrogation he admitted that there was outside involvement in the attack. *"Even the injured local person has confided that certain outsiders came and asked them to attack the police station,"* police sources confirmed. Sensing that the Maoists were taking advantage of the crisis, the police authorities called in an anti-Maoist specialist IGP rank officer. He quickly seized guns

[cxcv] **Organiser** February 12, 2008

from various homes in the area. A source connected to the operation stated, *"We have seized 12 guns from the area and the influence of the outlawed Maoist outfit Kui Labanga Sangha in the attack is apparent. We are dealing with the issue very cautiously. What is disturbing is the possibility of the radicals backing a certain community, (the Pana Christians)."*

The motivations of the Maoists are many. Yet why the attack upon the Brahmanigaon Police station just as the rioting had begun? Senior State official Suresh Mohapatra opined, *"The Maoists had possibly targeted Brahmanigaon Police Station to loot arms and ammunition. We have a report that about 30 Ultras (Maoists) taking cover of the crowd, were involved in the attack. We have reason to believe that it was a planned attack by Maoists as Brahmanigaon borders the Maoists' Naxal zone running from Gajapati to Rayagada District."* [CXCVI]

That very same day, Orissa's Christian leaders denounced the government's revelations regarding Maoist involvement in the attack. *"This is the Government's alibi to divert the people's attention from the real issues. The Government has not been able to produce any evidence. These are all baseless allegations."* Dalit Christian leader U. Raj pronounced. It is interesting that such a statement could be made within less than a day of the attack. Despite not being on-scene or privy to any investigative efforts, the Christian leadership publicly rubbished the police reports on the incident. On December 31st, the Maoists and Christians in two separate press releases demanded the arrest of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and a ban on the VHP and Bajrang Dal. Through these identical statements, the Maoists and Christians were clearly working in tandem with the same exact focus.

The obvious goals are the disenfranchisement of the Kandha from their lands and their basic civil rights and the discrediting and demonization of those Hindu groups making a stand for the rights of the Kandhamal tribals. The collusion of the Media, the Communists and the Congress Party in this conspiracy is complicit and implicit.

The normal operating procedures of the Maoist includes killing of all police and government representatives. This is done in order to protect the identification of the Maoists and to limit the investigative abilities of the authorities. No eyewitness means there will be no testimony to be used against them. The attack upon the Brahmanigaon police station, most likely an arms procurement raid, would have probably ended in a

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[CXCVI] **Times News Network** December 28, 2007

massacre. If the Special Forces had not arrived in time, it is quite probable that there would have been many more police widows and orphans in Kandhamal.

The Christian Pana-Maoist nexus became apparent after the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. On the 6th of October 2008, the police appeared to make a breakthrough in the murder case and the Maoists were at the center of it all.

"In a major breakthrough, Orissa's Criminal Investigation Department on Monday arrested three Christian tribals from Baliguda block in connection with the August 23 murders of VHP leader Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and four others at Jalespeta ashram in Kandhamal district. The arrested persons have been identified as Duryodhan Sunamajhi, Munda Badamajhi and Sanatana Badamajhi. A senior CID official who arrested the trio told The Indian Express on condition of anonymity that two single-barrel muzzle-loader guns and a shirt which could have been used as a mask were also recovered from them. They have been forwarded to a court in Baliguda. The CID, which is being assisted by the state's anti-Naxal police force, has found that about seven to eight Maoist hardliners were involved in the murders, while the others who accompanied them were trained in the use of firearms by the rebels. "Some other people lead the group to the ashram and were armed with sharp weapons," added the official. The arrests came two days after Maoist leader Sabyasachi Panda admitted to a group of media persons that Maoist groups in Orissa derived major support from minority communities. During his interview in the forests of Daringibadi block, Panda also claimed that there was pressure from both Christians and Dalits to kill Saraswati. "It is a fact that Christians form the majority in our organization. Our supporters in Rayagada, Gajapati and Kandhamal also belonged to the Christian community," he said."[CXCVII]

Crusading Panas

As the media frenziedly blamed Hindu activists for the violence, the evidence pointed elsewhere. In section 3.5 of John Dayal's White Paper he points out that a cow had been burnt alive by rioters targeting the Balliguda Convent. A Tehelka reporter attempted to cover up the loophole in its' '*Blame the Hindus*' game with juvenile banter. *"The Hindu fanatics killed the cow because it was a non-deshi (non-native) Christian jersey cow."* Another commentator, Ananga Chatterji, an associate professor from the University of California wrote, *"A cow, dragged from a shed, set afire, was beaten to death, identified as "Christian."* To be blunt this statement is a lie. Ananga Chatterji invented this scenario in an obvious

CXCVII **Express News Service** *'3 arrested in Lakshmananda murder case'* October 6, 2008

attempt to delegitimize and alienate the Hindu organizations in the eyes of the voting Hindu public. No one asks these people how they discern the alleged motivations of a hostile people they have no contact with. Yet their statements are accepted as credible.

It is important to remember that media reports are generally based on mere supposition and cases are presented with absolutely no attempt at investigation. This 'Christian Cow' incident is illuminating in this regard.

Protection of Cows is at the center and core of every Hindu activist. No Hindu will willingly kill a cow. The burning alive of a cow suggests that non-Hindus perpetrated the arson attack upon the Convent. This is not a supposition but a logical conclusion.

There are two major issues and demands of the Kandhamal Hindus.

1. Stop Fraudulent Conversions
2. Stop Cow Slaughter

The cow slaughter issue played a major role in the December 2007 violence. According to Bhikari Sethi, the 16 year old Christmas day burn victim, the reason the Christians gave for the attack was that they recognized him as an anti-cow slaughter activist. As they tortured him they mocked him for his stance on cow protection. *"You won't let us roast cows now we will roast you!"* Thus the only people that would kill a cow in Kandhamal are the Christians, the few Muslims and the Maoists. Anti-Cow slaughter activism also played a significant role in Swamiji's final days. Days before the assassination, Madhu Baba, a prominent monk and disciple of Swamiji was attacked by Christians near Tumudibandha for protesting against a cow being slaughtered. Swamiji staged a roadblock and a hunger-strike in protest. Police ignored the original and unlawful act of cow slaughter and accused him of flaring up tension and threatened him with stringent action. Cow protection has always been at the center of Swamiji's activism and his followers would never intentionally kill a cow.

A probable scenario is that non-Hindus actors were involved in the attack upon the Balliguda Convent. The cow's death at the hands of the arsonists implies that it had been killed by forces unconscious of and callous to the significance of cows. The Christian Pana attackers, leaving their forest strongholds after dusk, burnt, looted and desecrated not only Hindu homes but convents, churches and government buildings as well. Assured of a complicit media, fearless of an in-effective police response and

assured of the political backing of Pana Government ministers such as R.K. Nayak, Sugrib Singh, Padmanabha Behera and the powerful Indian Christian lobby, the Christian Panas acted with impunity.

Such behavior is not a new phenomenon. In a way, it's a kind of Christian Pana tradition. During the British era, the Christian Panas acted as surrogates of the British administration. As mentioned earlier the Salvation Army assumed guardianship of the Christian Panas. Under their wings, crimes of Pana converts went unreported, Pana criminals unapprehended and their victims uncompensated.

In more recent times we find a graphic example of Christian Pana political methods and behavior. The book *'Election Politics and Voting Behavior in India: a study of Orissa'* is a snapshot of the history of Christian Pana politics. *"A few months before the June election, a Sarava tribe member from the Saura ward of Serangagram Panchayat was beaten black and blue by the Panas. The incident further intensified the hostility of the Saravas towards the Panas. Against this background, 6 Panas raped a young and innocent tribal girl on 15th April 1977. This inflamed the situation. Saravas, being enraged, set ablaze the entire Pana street of Guma village."*[CXCVIII]

The calculated ruthlessness of the Christian Panas was, once again, in full force throughout the length and breadth of Kandhamal. Christian Panas outside of Kandhamal also did their part and joined in the acts of disruption. The Christians of Gajapati district villages of Alliganda and Paniganda blocked all vehicle traffic and did not allow police to pass through the road leading to the Kandhamal region. The police in Mohana block of Gajapati district kept the Christian Panas under watch after miscreants felled trees thus cutting off the Adava road towards Kandhamal. [CXCIX]

This information is suggestive that the Christian Panas were acting in a pre-arranged and coordinated manner. According to the media's Kandhamal mythology the Christians were helpless victims of aggressive VHP/RSS/Bajrang Dal instigated violence. Yet mysteriously the Christians were directly involved in blocking reinforcements from being sent to protect the allegedly victimized Christian Panas. The overall evidence points to a well thought out conspiracy hatched by the Christian Panas in order to disrupt the political initiatives of the Kandhas.

[CXCVIII] **Election Politics and Voting Behavior in India: a study of Orissa** B.B. Jena and Jaya Krishna Baral

[CXCIX] **Statesman News Service** December 27, 2008

December 27, 2008 was a violent day in Kandhamal. As if attempting to mock (CM) Chief Minister Patnaik's claims of a return to normalcy, Pana Christians torched the entire Kandha village of Barkhama. 212 Hindu tribal homes were set ablaze. In Brahmanigaon 130 Hindu homes were either burnt down or damaged. In the town of Gaddapur 48 Hindu homes were burnt down and 5 more in Kinan Noiga village as well. In the town of Gunkia, a Hindu temple was burnt to the ground. CM Patniak had made a statement earlier that day that, "*As many as 2000 people have been arrested so far.*"[CC] Obviously the wrong people were being detained.

In a closing act of violence, the Christian Panas of Pikusi, Rainagar, Alimalia Pakeri, Pangalmaha, Kilukupa joined with the Christians of Gumikia and burnt down a Shiva temple. After the violence in Brahmanigaon and Barakrama the villagers of Gumikia gathered in a field next to the Shiva temple and threatened the 6 priests at the temple. The 6 priests consisted of 3 women named Banduli Pradhan, Sunaphula Mallik and Nandini Satapathy and 3 men Sadrak Pradhan, Jagya Pradhan and Randera Pradhan. They stated that the Christian Panas warned them, three or four times, to leave or face the consequences. Finally on the night of January 8, 2008 a mob of Christians arrived with guns and set fire to the temple. Nandini Satapathy managed to rescue the Shiva deity (Linga) from the temple but besides that the entire temple was burnt to the ground. According to a '*Justice on Trial*' report, the leader in this assault was the Darsingbadi village council chairman named Junesh Pradhan. When asked as to why the temple was destroyed he claimed it was an act of vengeance for the churches burnt down in Barakrama.

In AICC (All India Christian Council) President John Dayal's White Paper he documents that the Christian Panas not only targeted Kandhas but the homes of 97 non-tribal Oriya Hindus as well. These homes were destroyed in Brahmanigaon and Godapur.[CCI] He also states that the Pana villages had become "*Villages of Women*."[CCII]

This is a very revealing and important piece of evidence. It indicates that the Christian Panas were confident of the safety of their women and children. It is also further verification of police reports that the Christian Pana men were avoiding the police fearing arrest. This strange disappearance of the Christian men was not based upon fear

[CC] **Pioneer News Service** December 28, 2007
[CCI] **White Paper on Kandhamal** Section 1.6 John Dayal
[CCII] **Ibid.** Section 1.4

but rather it appears to be part of an overall strategy. According to one theory, the Christian Panas were billeting themselves in prearranged secured locations in the forest and then venturing out at night to engage in well coordinated attacks. Another factor is that the Christian were hiding in the forest after being identified for various crimes related to the riots. Either way, many people avoided the relief camps. The government issued a plea requesting the people to leave the forests and take advantage of the shelter of the relief camps. The media presented a contrived scenario portraying the Christian Panas as being in a state of deathly fear. The facts, however, reveal a very different scenario.

The overall picture is one of conspiracy. While the media portrays the conspiracy as a Hindu one, the evidence clearly points to it being a case of collusion between the Christian Panas, the Indian Christian lobby, Minority pressure groups, the National and International media, political opponents of the BJP, India's Leftists and other members of the Indian elite. Dr. John Dayal, a Dalit Christian activist and Chief of AICC; the local Bhuvaneshwar Catholic Archbishop Raphael Chinnath; Nakul Nayak, a former M.P. and the founder of 'Milita Manch'; member of Parliament Radhakant Nayak who happens to be the chief of Orissa's World Vision unit and founder of the local NGO called NISWAS; and John Naik IPS (Ret.) are at the forefront of the Christian Pana aggressions. R.K. Nayak, formerly of the IAS (Indian Administration Service) was appointed to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of the Indian Parliament) by Sonia Gandhi, Chairman of the Congress Party. While in active government service, Radhakanta Nayak and John Nayak IPS (Retd.), acted as instruments of the Church. They repeatedly used their government positions to facilitate the proselytization of the poor and illiterate Pana and tribal communities.

According to the testimony of the late Swami Lakshmananda, R.K. Nayak is a converted Christian but by producing a false caste certificate as a tribal, he got himself selected for IAS(Indian Administration Service). Many saw a conspiracy in the fact that Swamiji was attacked in the ancestral village of R.K. Nayak. But Nayak clarified that he was not involved in the incident by claiming that he did not even know anyone named Swami Lakshmananda. This statement of R.K. Nayak is a ludicrous alibi and only served to confirm the suspicions against him.

Key persons suspected to be at center of the conspiracies are John Nayak, a former DGP of state police, Isaac Behera, an IAS (Ret.) and Padmanabha Behera MP. Many experts

and political watchers see these individuals as the key instigators of the ongoing tension in Kandhamal. The timing and location of Christian Pana actions and efforts were clearly designed to enrage and harass the Kandha. The Indian elite acted in a lock step manner perpetrating the violence and victimization of the Kandha people. Their aggression shielded and empowered by a compliant media and by the complicity of corrupt politicians, the Christian Panas refused calls for peace and prepared for war.

"Christian militancy is gaining ground in Orissa, according to the police, to counter Hindutva organizations opposing 'conversion' activities by missionaries. The arrest of three Christians on Monday in connection with the August 23 murder of Swami Lakshmananda and the seizure of sophisticated arms and ammunition from them has led the police to suspect links between these 'converted Christians' and Maoist forces. Besides the three arrested accused on Monday, the police had earlier arrested four other accused who were also Christians, and seized weapons allegedly used in the murder of Lakshmananda. The arrested persons, according to the crime branch, have admitted involvement in the murder of the seer. Orissa's top Naxal leader, Sabyasachi Panda, had on Thursday told a group of media persons in the forest that most of his cadres in Kandhamal district belonged to the minority community. The police believe Panda hatched the murder conspiracy and supplied single-barrel guns to the killers to appease the 'majority Christian militia' in the Bansadhara Zonal Committee headed by him. Meanwhile sources said the Crime Branch is also investigating the alleged role of at least 'three top Christian leaders', two of them from Orissa and one in Delhi, in the killing of Lakshmananda."[CCIII]

Peace Committees and Warpaths

"The district administration convened a peace meeting for reestablishing peace in the area. Security officials became increasingly suspicious when they found only Hindus responding to the peace call." Times of India [CCIV]

Times of India journalist Rajaram Sathapaty, explained, *"The Government had invited the Hindus and Christians to several peace meetings, but the Christians were not coming. One reason is that they suspect that this is a BJD-BJP coalition government and the BJP is treated as the 'Pro-Hindu' party and the BJD are their supporters. So the Christians have a grudge and feel that the Congress Party is more favorable to them. The Government became suspicious; why the Christians are not coming to the Peace Committee meetings. There is no danger with all the*

[CCIII] **Deccan Chronicle** 'Christian militancy on rise' October 7, 2008
[CCIV] **Times of India** August 26, 2008

armed police personnel all around, yet 'still they will not come even after our repeated personal requests.' Then they got intelligence reports as to the reason. The reason was that the Christians were engaging in violence and criminal activities. Contrary to the popular opinion and media reports, the Christians do not want peace. Therefore they refused to come to the government sponsored peace efforts. They were all afraid that if they show their faces at the meeting they will be confronted by the Superintendent of Police, the Collector and there will be a room full of local Police Inspectors all with the power to arrest them. They will be identified by the police, 'oh you were the one I saw open fire with an illegal firearm' or 'I saw your face during the attack on the police station.' The Pana Christians feared that they will be facing arrest. So they refused to attend the Peace Committee meetings. Then the Police began investigating and they came to know that these Christian Panas have accumulated many guns. So acting on this intelligence the CRPF surrounded the entire village. In the middle of the night, they stormed the village of Sikarama. The entire area was sealed. They were shocked to discover 20 guns and loads of ammunition. Then the authorities understood everything. These people are not interested in peace. Why the big guns? These guys weren't poachers? Obviously these weapons were for killing people."[CCV]

A related Times of India article dated August 26, 2008 connected this arms cache to the attack on Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. Police suspected that the violence was premeditated based on the huge arms haul made from the 'non-descript village of Sikarama'. Strategically located, the village sits between Darsingbadi (the village and home base of Pana leader R.K. Nayak and near the site of the December 2007 attack on the Swami) and Brahmanigaon, the site of the Maoist-Christian police station attack.

During the December violence *"The Police were also baffled at the helpless condition of the S.P. (Superintendent of Police) of neighboring Gajapati District. He had been sent there, only to find himself in a near hostage situation. Intelligence inputs soon indicated that what was being touted as in the name of religion was part of a bigger design to create major violence in the area. It was a warlike situation. The beleaguered S.P. was first released and evacuated."*[CCVI]

The Administration and police were under siege. The Christian Panas were on the warpath using guns and arson as their weapons and their Christian minority status as a shield. The police were under siege, outnumbered and at many times outgunned. The CRPF Jawans (Central Reserve Police Force soldiers) were called in to assist. *"The CRPF*

CCV **Author Interview with Rajaram Sathapathy** Bhuwaneshwar, Orissa October 5,2008
CCVI **Times of India** August 26, 2008

Jawans stormed Sikarama village by surprise in the dead of night. The entire area was sealed and each house was subjected to an intensive search. What came was beyond the belief of all-20 guns and ammunition. 'Now why would a village amass so many illegal arms? Even Maoists don't do that. Orissa has so far not heard of arms being stored in large scale in rural areas.' A police official stated. Though 12 people were arrested during the raid, the authorities for some mysterious reason did not organize similar operations in the region. 'It is naïve to believe that only one village had arms. There must be more in the area. The disease wasn't nipped in the bud and the wound was allowed to fester.' said an official." Weapons were not the only area of concern. Kandhamal had become a center for the illegal cultivation of Marijuana. Intelligence reports confirmed that the funds were being channeled to the Maoists.[CCVII]

A Kandhamal government employee stated on the condition of anonymity that the Pana Christians were transporting the guns, ammunition and drugs through the use of ambulances. *"The churches have many infirmaries and undercover of this network, unscrupulous people smuggle weapons and drugs throughout the district and beyond. The police rarely ever search ambulances. Some suspect that women and girls are being trafficked as well. No efforts are being made to search ambulances mostly because the corruption runs deep. Too much money is being made. The case of the former S.P. of Kandhamal Satish Gajbhiya is a perfect example of this. As soon as he began combating the drug trade he was replaced and sent out of the district."*[CCVIII]

Violating the Victimized

"We feel neglected here—even our political representatives are all Panas. Panas convert to Christianity and are well off," says Kabiser Mallick, who belongs to the Kandha tribe." IBN Live Report

The entire world is now familiar with tales of hapless Christians being massacred in Kandhamal. The evidence, however, points to a reality quite contrary to the media spin. Reports of helpless Christian refugees fleeing the wrath of violent Hindu zealots are based on unverifiable accusations. The violence impacted both communities and the victims were Hindu and Christian alike. Records and reliable eyewitness accounts suggest a majority of victims and refugees were Hindu tribals. The overflow of Hindus was such that nearly 500 Kandha Hindu refugees were evacuated out of Kandhamal to

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[CCVII] **Ibid.**
[CCVIII] **Author Interview with Kandhamal Official** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa, October 5, 2008

Bhuvaneshwar, the State capital. They were sheltered at the UBSS facility, an emergency relief center primarily used for the rehabilitation of cyclone and flood victims.[CCIX]

P.C. Dogra Indian Police Service (I.P.S.), (Ret) President of the Forum on Integrated Security based in Chandigar, visited Kandhamal on a fact finding mission on January 18-21, 2008. He gives a clear picture of the conditions he found a week after peace had been restored. *"It is a fact that a large number of churches and homes of Christians were burnt and damaged especially in the town of Barakhama of Baliguda Block. But it is also a fact that a lot many more homes of the Hindus were burnt. A larger percentage of Hindu homes were destroyed than Christian homes. I have seen this with my own eyes. One Kagheswar Mallick was lynched to death due to stone pelting by Christians. Unfortunately neither the National nor the International media have mentioned these facts. I am also sorry to say that when the Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil visited Kandhamal, he only visited Barakhama village where Christian Churches were burnt but deliberately avoided visiting Brahmanigaon, where the entire Hindu Basti (colony) was burnt by the Christians with the help of the Maoists."*[CCX]

It may be noted that among the Maoists in Kandhamal there are many recent converts to Christianity. Security forces have reportedly seized approximately 2 dozen guns from the 47 Maoists arrested in connection with the burning of Hindu villages. As pointed out by Officer Dogra, a majority of the victims were Kandha Hindus. India's Central Government, under the control of Sonia Gandhi's Congress Party added insult to injury by ignoring the plight of the tribes. Indian Government representatives intentionally avoided meeting with the Kandhas and refused to visit any riot affected Hindu areas. *"It created a lot of resentment in the State of Orissa. Brahamnigaon, the worst affected village where an entire Hindu colony was torched, was not included in his (Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil) itinerary. The Minister visited a particular area where the Christian community was affected. On being asked why Minister Patil visited Christian Barakhama village instead of Brahmanigaon, Orissa Chief Minister (C.M.) Naveen Patnaik said with a smile, 'The choice of the visit was the Union Home Minister's.'* [CCXI]

M.C. Bhandare, the Governor of Orissa, a Congress Party appointee, did a repeat of the Union Home Minister's selective visiting pattern. During the Governor's trip to

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CCIX **Pragadibadi News Journal** January 2, 2008
CCX **Violence in Kandhamal-The other side of the story** P.C. Dogra
CCXI **Pioneer News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa, January 1, 2008

Kandhamal he *"visited some Christian families ignoring other communities at Barakhama…at Barakhama, most of the affected were Christians and the Governor visited them."* District Collector Manish Verma and S.P. Nikhil Kanodia confirmed that, *"Many non-Christians also met the Governor but only near the helicopter."*

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) demanded that the Governor visit Kandhamal again to assuage the feelings of the deprived families.[CCXII] The obvious bias of the UPA Central Government and Congress Party leadership were the cause of much consternation. The local media highlighted the blatant manner in which the Hindu tribals were ignored. *"…differentiating between the affected families, victims of the recent Hindu-Christian clashes…Brahmanigaon, the worst affected village in the recent communal clash, was deliberately kept out of his itinerary."*[CCXIII] *"The BJP took strong exception to Union Home Minister Patil's visit to Barakhama village instead of Brahmanigaon which was worst hit…Barakhama village is dominated by a particular religious community whereas Brahmanigaon, the other worst affected village is where the other community was at the receiving end of the violence and hundreds of homes were torched."* [CCXIV]

It is important to note the euphemistic phraseology applied by the media when it is forced to admit that Hindus were the victims. There is no such restraint shown when portraying Christian victims. Terms like 'the other' are only reserved for articles that reveal the truth. As an example let's rephrase the above Statesman News article with straightforward English. *"Barakhama is dominated by Christians, whereas Brahmanigaon, the worst affected village is where the Hindu community was at the receiving end of the violence and hundreds of Hindu homes torched."* The meaning is clear.

The National and International media never published these facts yet did publish the prejudiced observations based upon these selective visits. By avoiding the devastated plight of the Hindus, a contrived version of reality was composed and then imposed upon the consciousness of the world. Obviously the decision to focus on the Pana Christians represents a well thought out process designed to highlight them as the sole victims of the violence. By ignoring the Kandha Hindus, the Congress Party appointed government officials manipulated the imagery of the Kandhamal crises into a politically

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CCXII **Indian Express News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa, February9, 2008
CCXIII **Express News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa January 2, 2008
CCXIV **Statesman News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa January 2, 2008

suitable scenario. The intentional dismissal of the plight of the Kandhas is directly tied to their political outlook and agenda.

Despite acting within the capacity of an Indian government responsible for all Indian citizens, the Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil and Orissa State Governor Bhandare abused their posts to favor one group of citizens over another. The Pana Christians are a solid group of potential Congress Party supporters whereas the Kandhas are firmly committed supporters of the opposing BJD or BJP parties. It appears that the Congress Party abused its position at the Center in an effort to bolster its political base amongst the Pana Christians. By contrasting itself as an alternate to the BJD-allied with the allegedly anti-Christian BJP-the Congress Party has presented itself as the only viable and safe choice for Orissa's Christians.

Union Home Minister Patil's biased approach has some possible explanations.

1. Being prejudiced and favoring Christian citizens over others, the Minister's bias did not allow any concern or interest in the plight of the Hindus.
2. The Christian Panas bribed the Union Minister to avoid the Kandhas fearing that the Home Minister's visit would bring the spotlight upon the massive destruction of Hindu property.
3. He has absolutely no independence and acts in accordance to the agendas of powerful overseers such as Sonia Gandhi.
4. He is absolutely clueless and only reacts when pushed or upon receipt of commands from his higher ups.

There is evidence that the Minister was indeed clueless. As the violence escalated, noted film maker Mahesh Bhatt desperately tried to contact the Minister. A full 24 hrs later he finally contacted the HRD Minister Arjun Singh who then got him in touch with Home Minister Patil. Shocked by the ambivalence and lack of concern, Mahesh Bhatt held a Press conference in Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa on January 1, 2008 and revealed that after a 24 hour effort he finally spoke to Home Minister Patil on the phone, *"To my surprise Patil had no idea about the violence in Kandhamal."*

The Pioneer News Service reported on January 6, 2008 that India's Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil and Orissa Governor Bhandare were not the only ones to ignore the plight of the Kandha Hindu community. Orissa's Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik of the ruling BJD neglected to console the family of a dead Kandha or visit the site of the

devastated Hindu communities. *"It is unfortunate that the CM Mr. Naveen Patnaik did not visit the house of Dania Mallick in Barakhama who had been killed nor did he visit the area where hundreds of Hindu homes were torched."*[CCXV]

As the Congress and BJD Party competed for the mantle of '*Christian Guardianship'* and 'Secularism,' the Kandhas were left to suffer in misery, consoled by none. The BJP had been banned from visiting the region as an assortment of politicians such as the Congress Party and various exclusivist minority groups descended upon Kandhamal. Despite the Government imposed curfew that banned even BJP government ministers, John Dayal the head of AICC (All India Christian Coalition) entered into Kandhamal. He freely travelled to and throughout the district. An Oriya Daily newspaper, wrote in this regard, *"Christians carried out attacks in various places during the riots said well-known social worker and Indian Christian leader John Dayal. However when the Central delegation of BJP and CPM government ministers could not visit Kandhamal due to the restrictions in force, all are astonished as to how John Dayal visited the district. How is it that he met with and spoke with the senior government officials in Kandhamal despite the ban on such activities? This indicates a major gap in the State administration. This indicates that some high level members of the administration are biased towards the Christians."*[CCXVI]

The shameless pandering to the Christian Panas and the outright prejudice against the Kandhas only served to intensify the animosity between the two groups. Politicians trumpeted their alleged concern for the Christian victims of 'Hindu' aggression. A complicit media regurgitated the propaganda. For the Kandhas, the lack of concern was a blatant reminder of their plight. There was no official justice. For the Kandhas 'Hope' had one name and one name alone; Swami Vedanta Keshari Lakshmananda Saraswati.

After the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, the biased outlook of India's leadership became obvious. Both Sonia Gandhi, the Chairperson of the government's ruling Indian National Congress Party and the Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh ignored the murder of the Swami. Blind to the root cause of the violence they characterized the repercussions to the Swami's killing as '*a National Shame'*. They intentionally disconnected the effect from the cause. This was clearly done

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CCXV **Pioneer News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa January 6, 2008
CCXVI **Pragatibadi News Journal** January 5, 2008

in order to impose their artificial construct that had been designed to discredit their political rivals.

Ashok Sahu, IPS (Retd.), former Inspector General of Police of the State of Arunchal Pradesh has been investigating the underlying factors of Orissa's long term political crisis. His statements in this regard are illuminating. *"Missionaries are operating with massive funds from foreign countries which are pumped into NGOs in disguised operations with the goal of converting the local tribals into Christianity. Chief of such NGOs is one "WORLD VISION" patronized by one Mr. Radhakanta Nayak, a local of Darsingbadi village from the "Pana" community but later converted to Christianity. He happens to be an employee of the State Government promoted to the IAS and retired, and now a Member in the Rajya Sabha (India's Upper House of Parliament). His henchmen were the assailants who attacked Swamiji on 24th of December 2007. Meanwhile, the Kui tribals among the Kandhas in the District were agitating against the conspiracy by Mr. Nayak. Mr. Nayak is engineering for getting a Presidential notification under the provisions of the Constitution, to get his "Christian Pana" community, who are scheduled castes relisted as scheduled tribe along with the Kui on the ground that the former also speak the Kui dialect. Various reservation facilities to which scheduled tribes are entitled are not available to persons converted to Christianity. On hearing the news of the assault on Swamiji, the already agitated Kui community reacted and protested throughout the district against the "Christian Pana" community converted to Christianity. Interestingly, the Maoist (Naxalites) activists in the district are also mostly from among the recent converts to Christianity. Among 47 Maoists arrested in connection with recent burning of villages inhabited by Hindus (Brahmanigaon, Jhinjiriguda, Katingia, and Godapur) as a counter to attacks by tribals on the Churches, 20 guns have been recovered by the security forces from them. It is evident that the Maoists and the Church are working hand in glove with each other to spread fratricidal killings and clashes among the tribals which is evident also from incidents in Karbi-Anglong and North Cachar Hills districts in Assam. Conversions of poor tribal villagers are being conducted at gun point and by spreading terrorism. While in active government service Mr. Radhakanta Nayak IAS (Retd.) and Mr. John Nayak IPS (Retd.) both converted Christians were instruments of the Church to proselytize the poor and illiterate "Pana" and tribal communities in Kandhamal district of Orissa. Under guise of NGOs, thousands of dollars are pumped into the country for conversion of tribals in Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and the North-East. Taking advantage of the poverty and lack of education, thousands have been converted who are also being trained*

for separatist movements like NSCN in Nagaland and Maoist insurgency in the aforesaid states."[CCXVII]

Evidently, the activities of the Church and the various NGOs officially dedicated to humanitarian efforts represent a clear and present danger to India's National security and integrity.

The callousness of the Government officials, the ineptness of the Police and the corruption of politicians like R.K. Nayak, Padmanabha Behera, Sugrib Singh, Isaac Behera, John Nayak and finally the aggressive hostility of the Christian converted Panas put the Kandhas into a dangerous predicament. After the events of December 2007 the Kandhas decided to organize themselves into effective community support networks. Various groups were developed dedicated to creating vibrant and self reliant Kandha communities. The Kandhas were also slightly mollified when their demand for the ouster of Steel and Mines Minister Padmanabha Behera was met. The Pana leader had been a central figure in the Pana's aggressive stances. His resignation on December 27, 2008 was seen as a welcome development amongst the Kandha community. As a result of the December 2007 riots, the Pana pressure group Phulbani Kui Jana Sangha, was stripped of its legal status.

On December 31st 2007, the Orissa State government announced a package for the traumatized Kandhamal district. A high-level meeting was held at the State Secretariat presided over by the Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik. The Government declared the following package:
* *Pana Christians will not get the status of Tribals*
* *Caste certificates will be verified*
* *Rs. 100,000 compensation for every death*
* *Rs. 10,000 compensation for each damaged home*
* *New houses to replace every burnt home*

By early February 2008, the Kandhas throughout the State of Orissa united and formed the Orissa Kandh Surakhya Manch under the leadership of Pabitra Kanhar. Kandha leaders including Justice Papanna, Baliguda MLA Karendra Majhi and Prahlad Pradhan and others from Kandhamal, Gajapati, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Ganjam and Nayagarh developed a State wide organization in order to protect the rights of their people. They

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CCXVII **HPI Press Release** January 4,2008

immediately began by demanding a change in the 2002 Presidential Order which the Christian Panas have been using to claim ST (Scheduled Tribe) status. The State wide Kandha organization cited this attempt by the Christian Panas as '*causing great harm to the socio-economic and political interests of the genuine tribal population of the State as a whole'*. Orissa Kandh Surakhya Manch also highlighted the illegalities of various Panas such as former IAS officers Radhakant Nayak, Isaac Behera and former IPS officer John Nayak who gained government employment through the use of false certificates. They condemned the Ranganath Mishra Committee report that called for the extension of SC (Scheduled Caste) to those outside the Indic based caste system as a primary cause of the turmoil in the State. Out of the violence a new sense of unity and purpose arose amongst the Kandha people of Orissa. However in a sinister foreshadowing of events to come the Maoists set up their new Kandhamal base at Kotgarh, very near to Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati's Ashram.

Uprising Sons of the Earth

"This is not a Hindu-Christian conflict but a Kandha-Pana one. All land encroached upon by the Panas should be given back to the Kandhas. The entire problem can be resolved if the State government enforced the law and the injunctions of the Court." Lambodhar Kanhar, Chief of the Kandhamal Kandha Tribe

During a month long fact finding mission to Orissa, (September-October 2008) three weeks after the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati during the Jalespatta Girls' School Massacre, I interviewed many people. I spoke with Hindus, Christians, Government Ministers, Professors, Priests, students and everyday people. A majority presented realistic perspectives. However some people spoke of a Kandhamal of old that could only be described as a kind of bucolic paradise. The media frequently parroted this view which speaks of two diverse communities living as one. The image is that of Kandhas and Panas singing, smiling and complimenting one another as they thrived on the magnanimity of abundant good will.

According to this version, if there were any problems at all, it was their shared poverty, lack of infrastructure and other miseries. This theory states that the Panas and Kandha had no major differences between them until they were instigated by outsiders. One Christian Pana Christian named Mohan Digal put it this way, *"All this trouble is only about politics. It's just about vote bank politics. Our religions are not responsible for this. This is*

just stirred up ethnic troubles. The people from the plains area are the one's responsible for creating mischief in Kandhamal." When asked about the Maoists, *"The Maoists forces are just too far distant to be a factor. They are more than 100 KM away from Kandhamal district to cause trouble."*[CCXVIII]

Meanwhile Hindus clearly blame the Christian Missionaries and the Church as the instigators of all the trouble. *"These Missionaries convert the Panas and the Tribals also. They teach them to despise the Hindu Gods and Hindus become angry."* Stated a Hindu Kandha tribal named Ram Pradhan.

Both these views, no doubt, have some merit but the situation is much more complicated. The foremost and impacting influence upon Kandhamal is represented by its people; the Pana and the Kandha. By understanding the people and the history of their impact we can decipher the complexity of Kandhamal. The Panas have been discussed at length and the Kandhas in brief. Therefore let us look at the historical records regarding the nature of the Kandhas and their imprint on the history of the region.

In this regard, the official view of the current Kandhamal Administration states, *"The Horrific ritual of human sacrifice practiced by the Kandhas up to the middle of the 19th century has been an indelible blot on the community, but the way they offered dogged resistance to the British for several decades, not withstanding their deprivation, they simply deserve kudos for their valiant fight."*[CCXIX]

As noted the Kandha put up a long and valiant fight against the British yet this is only a recent example of the Kandha's warlike legacy. Over 2000 years ago, in 261 B.C., these same Kandha people were at the forefront of resisting the armies of Ashoka the Great. It was within this very region of Orissa that Ashoka fought his last battle in the area known as Daspalla. It was the ferociousness of these Kandhas and other tribals fighting in defense of their lands and forests that brought about the epiphany of Ashoka. Despite being victorious, Ashoka was shaken by the brutality and the immensity of the loss of life involved. He thus forswore all war and violence. For the Kandhas, loss of their sacred land meant the very loss of their lives. Thus they bitterly fought Ashoka's all conquering armies to the last man. *"The tribals of Orissa are a tough people. They gave*

CCXVIII **Author Interview with Mohan Digal** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 25, 2008
CCXIX **Kandhamal Administration Official Web Portal** kandhamal.nic.in/km-intr/km-trv.htm

Ashoka the Great the fight of his life. Ashoka invaded Kalinga (modern Orissa) and engaged in his final battle in Daspalla in the heart of Kandha territory in 261 B.C. There was no king to oppose him, but the tribals fought against him. Ashoka won the Kalinga war, but 110,000 people died in the battle. Ashoka never fought again and took to Buddhism."[CCXX]

This deep connection with their land has been a constant factor in the Kandha story. The times may change, the rulers may come and go, but the Kandha identity and their lands are intertwined. Though being protective of their lands, religion and traditions, history reveals that the Kandha were tolerant of strangers and appeared to welcome them. *"The route that passes through Kalinga (Orissa) and Phulbani (Kandhamal) was very ancient and was popular with the Monk community and traders of the ancient and medieval period. The route served mostly for the transportation from coastal Orissa to central India. Huen Tsung of China also used this route. Dungi, Kandhamal had a monk settlement. It was a center for worship being a monastery and a resting place. Near Chakapad, a mound named 'Chakalati' exists and the name Brahmanapada is related to the site. At some point, the monk community left the place and the site passed into oblivion. There is an inscription found on a rock at Amlapani in Katringia of Phulbani Block. This spot signifies the movements of the Monk community. There is evidence of an overlapping of Buddhism and Shaivism…"*[CCXXI]

This information is extremely valuable and relevant to our understanding of modern Kandhamal. It is proof that the Kandhas have had a long tradition of interaction with the mainstream of Indian culture. It is verification of the fact that the Indic traditions of Buddhism and Hinduism have not only been long familiar to the Kandhas but had flourished within their realm. The Buddhist -Shiva temple of Kandhamal is over 1200 years old. The fact is Buddhist and Hindu monks popularized the Kandhamal trade route, established monasteries and temples and were an integral part of Kandhamal society. Thus, rather than being a Hindu 'convertor' imposing Hinduism upon tribals, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati represented a return to the ancient days of yore. Ancient Kandhamal was a center of Hindu and Buddhist learning and religious practice. In those days saffron robed monks very like Swami Lakshmananda traversed the lands of the Kandhas. The warlike Kandhas obviously cherished these holy men and women of old just as they cherished Swami Lakshmananda.

[CCXX] **Tehelka Magazine** Vol 5 Issue 36 September 13, 2008
[CCXXI] **Kandhamal Administration Official Web Portal** '*Kandha Cultural Profile*' http://kandhamal.nic.in/km-intr/km-cult.htm

History proves that none could abide in the realm of the Kandhas without their leave. The Brahmin culture has very ancient roots in Kandhamal as verified by the Brahmanapada site. Under the protection of the Kandhas a contemporaneous Hindu-Buddhist culture blossomed in the region. It is significant that both these branches of the Dharmic tree flourished in ancient Kandhamal.

There is a large gap in the Kandha historical record. By the time the British arrived upon the scene, the Kandhas became embattled in a struggle that continues to this very day. The earliest references to the Kandha's violent resistance to the British are dated to the years 1766, 1778 and 1801.[CCXXII] From 1815 to 1835 the Kandhas carried out an off and on war against the British and their allies. Than after an 11 year lull, starting in 1846 the Kandhas went on the warpath once again. After a full 2 years of preparation the Kandhas rose up in rebellion against the British. This struggle lasted 10 long years. Even in the 11 years before the 1846 uprising, despite the defeat of the Kandha leadership in 1835, the British were unable to defeat the Kandhas. In response the British truncated the Kandha stronghold from the Boudh district on February 15, 1855 and officially labeled the region as '*The Kandhamals'*.

In 1884 the British were able to finally subdue the Kandha. This was only accomplished by the help of the Christian Panas of Ganjam and Nayagarh, regions that bordered Kandhamal. In 1910 there was 'a general revolt' by the Meria Kandha followed by a major uprising in 1914. Again in 1920 'the Kandha Malias of Orissa revolted due to land alienation and exploitation of the tribals.'[CCXXIII]

Beyond organized rebellions, revolts and uprisings the Kandha are on record for smaller yet deadly acts of resistance. In 1901 British civil servant Stanley Price wrote, *"The Kandhas (Kandha), famous for the human sacrifice 'meriah' sacrifice, from time to time demonstrate their existence by the murder of a policeman or by a little uprising on their own account."*

Even as late as the 1920s such individual and community responses continued, *"The Kandhas stopped paying rent. They attacked the Police which came to arrest them. They refused to pay 'kist' (installments) to the Maharaj of Jeypore. In the Koraput and Ganjan tracts, popular*

CCXXII **Ibid.**
CCXXIII **British Administration Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission** 1922

responses of the tribals to Gandhi's civil disobedience movement grew out of the oppression and exploitation of the tribals by the landlords, moneylenders and the faulty forest laws."[CCXXIV]

According to Kandha tradition war is not an urge acted upon in a spontaneous manner. Like all other aspects of their lives it has a sacred significance. Thus before embarking on the path to war important rituals are performed. The exact moment of attack is guided by Janis or the priestly class. This aspect of Kandha warfare was noted as early as the 1870s Herbert Spencer wrote in his 1876 treatise '*Political Institutions, Being Part V of the Principles of Sociology,*' *"Kandhas, whose priests decide on the time for war, give the signal for attack."*[CCXXV] The Kandhas are one of the few remaining groups to have maintained a fierce loyalty to their ancestral traditions. Conclusions that attempt to portray the Kandhas as an easily manipulated group fall far short of the mark that does not fit the evidence. History proves that there have been approximately 3 methods used to dominate the Kandha community.

1. Negotiating a mutually beneficial agreement similar to the early Pana migrants into Kandhamal
2. Manipulate them on the individual level through indebtedness and liquor consumption
3. Completely subjugate them through superior military force as done by the British and the CRPF

The Panas used both negotiations and manipulation while the British used brute force and manipulation in their efforts to subdue the Kandha. Otherwise the Kandha remained free of all outside domination. Throughout history the Kandhas have fiercely resisted injustice and invasion. Rather than followers, the Kandha have always been leaders among men. *"The Kandhas crossed over from the State of Gumsar and raised the flag of revolt. The Paikas rose to a man and joined them under Jagabandhu."*[CCXXVI]

We get a more detailed account of this episode in the Orissa State Government Reference Manual 2004 in the *'Martial Tradition of Orissa'*. *"In March 1817 nearly 400 Kandhas marched from Ghumusar in Ganjam to Khurda where the Paikas joined with them. They attacked the Thana of Banapur and set fire to the government buildings. They killed nearly 100 people and carried off a treasure of Rupees 15,000. When they entered Khurda, all the*

CCXXIV **Anti-Colonial Tribal Movements in India**
CCXXV **Political Institutions, Being Part V of the Principles of Sociology** Herbert Spencer 1876
CCXXVI **History of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa Under British Rule** Lewis Sydney and Stewart O'Malley 1925

Government officials fled. The English Commander of one detachment was killed during the fighting in Gangapada. Then the Raja of Khurda, Mukund Dev joined these rebels when they entered Puri and declared the fall of the British. The entire region of South Orissa was under the possession of the Rebels."[CCXXVII]

"The Kandha tribals played a stellar role in the Khurda rebellion commanded by Buxi Jagabandhy against the British in 1817. There had been smoldering discontent against the British rule in the coastal areas of Orissa for several years, on the grounds of agrarian, economic and political issues. It was a band of 400 Kandhas of Ghumusar who sparked off the conflagration by entering the Khurda region to fight. Buxi Jagabandhu and his army joined there and the revolt soon spread to Khurda, Tangi, Gopa, Balagarh, Banapur, Pipili, Nayagarh and other places. They captured Puri in April 1817 and proclaimed the restoration of the authority of the Hindu King who had been deposed by the British. The revolt was so widespread and strident that the British considered their position in Orissa to be perilous. But gradually the rebellion fell through. Buxi Jagabandhu remained with the Kandhas of Ghumusar and Boudh for some years starting from May 1818. The Rajas of Boudh, Ghumusar, Nayagarh and Dasapalla supported him and the Kandhas of the areas gave him protection till he surrendered to the British in 1825."[CCXXVIII]

British records noted the brilliance of the Kandha leader Dora Bisoi and effectiveness of the Kandha warriors. *"It was Dora Bisoi who had first ignited the flame of rebellion in the State of Khurda by dispatching a band of Ghumusar Kandha to Banapur, then to Khurda and Puri and succeeded in providing real momentum to the historic Paika revolution of Khurda in 1817. Had he not acted, the Paika revolution of 1817 may have not become a reality. The second phase of the Kandha revolution was under the leadership Chakera Bisoi, Nabaghan Kanhar, Bira Kanhara, Chunder Ghurnaik, Bhutia Sardar and others in the years from 1846 to 1856."*[CCXXIX]

"Dara Bisoi, commander of the Ghumusar force, spearheaded the 'off and on' revolts spanning 1815-1835. In all these revolts, the Kandhas of Ghumusar, including the Uttar Ghumusar area of G. Udaygiri took a leading part. The refractory Bhanja Raja, Dhananjaya Bhaja was dethroned and the principality was annexed to the British Empire on November 3, 1835. The deposed King and Dara Bisoi fled to the Udaygiri area. Rebellion spread like wildfire in the entire Uttar Ghumusar region. The British army had to confront fierce resistance everywhere. Meanwhile the

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CCXXVII **Orissa State Government Reference Manual** *Martial Tradition of Orissa* 2004
CCXXVIII **Kandhamal Administration Official Web Portal** kandhamal.nic.in
CCXXIX **B. R. A. Volume 1855-57** E.A. Samuel Secretary to the Governor of Bengal February 1, 1856

King breathed his last on December 31, 1835. The rebellion was crushed with utmost cruelty."[CCXXX]

The words of G.E. Russel, the special commissioner of Ghumusar are worth repeating again. "*Numbers of Kandha were shot like wild beats, some were seized and hung up on trees. Their villages were everywhere laid to ashes."* After the British destruction of the Kandhas, Dara Bisoi fled to Boudh-Kandhamal area with some of his lieutenants. He surrendered in 1837 and the kings of Angul handed him over to the British. Dara Bisoi spent the next nine years in harsh captivity until he died in 1846 in Gooty near Madras [Chennai] far from his home, his people and his forest.

The wrath of the Kandha tribals is legendary. We have more evidence of this from the writings of Maltby. "*The Kandha revolutionaries attacked a strong detachment of government troops led by British officers escorting prisoners between Udaygiri and Durgaprasad. The Kandhas killed thirteen soldiers including two British officers named Lt. Broomeley and Ensign Gibbon in Kurmingia mountain pass*." [CCXXXI]

Just as one Kandha uprising had been dowsed another began. In Boudh-Kandhamal a new Kandha leader arose to carry on the struggle against the British. "*Nabaghana Kanhar of Ratabari rose in revolt against the king of Boudh and the British in 1835. The king of Anjul extended his support and cooperation. His two year revolt however came to an end when he, due to the conspiring of Sam Bisoi, a British supporter, handed over some Ghumusur insurgents who had taken shelter under him to the British. Kanhars two sons, Bira and Maheswar surrendered. On account of Dara Bisoi and Nabaghana Kanhar, the Kandha uprising had assumed gigantic proportions within the Kandhamal region. Hence the British had to requisition military forces from Madras, Nagpur, and the Bengal divisions to quell the Kandha uprising."*[CCXXXII]

It is important to note the terminology used when referring to the Kandha's resistance efforts. Words such as 'uprising', 'rebellion', 'revolt', 'insurrection', and 'revolution' are inadequate descriptors when applied to the freedom struggles of a colonized people. These words represent a subtle manipulation of the nature of events. The British infamously refer to India's 1857 freedom movement as the Sepoy Mutiny, whereas Indians refer to the event as the 1857 War of Independence. The latter view is more accurate for it represents an attempt by a conquered people to reclaim their original independence. The former view represents a lawfully subject peoples' attempt to

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CCXXX **Kandhamal Administration Official Web Portal** kandhamal.nic.in
CCXXXI **Writings of Maltby**, pg. 183
CCXXXII **Kandhamal Administration Official Web Portal** kandhamal.nic.in

overthrow their government in an unlawful manner. The 1857 war was a sub continental wide effort that included Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. By labeling it the Sepoy Mutiny, the British trivialized the pan-Indian nature of the event. The very word 'mutiny' suggests an unlawful effort and a betrayal by a people naturally subjected to the authority in question.

We find this same problem in the use of the words 'revolt', 'rebellion', 'revolution', and 'uprising'. These forms of resistance when accurately applied refer to an indigenous subgroup's attempt at political change within the framework of their native societies. Throughout history we see such events based upon the failures of leadership amongst a people. In other words, there is a mechanism based on internal pressures related to localized issues. In this scenario, revolts, revolutions, uprisings and rebellions can be accurately applied. However, when a subjugated people attempt to remove the yoke of foreign rule it is more accurately identified as a war. Thus we find that in the earlier writings regarding the Kandhas resistance to British rule the term 'war' is applied.

In John William Kaye's book *'The Administration of the East India Company: A History of Indian Progress'* he refers to '*The Goomsur War of 1837-38'*. It was later that other terms such as 'revolt', 'uprising' and 'rebellion' were added to the lexicon of political reporting.

The second Goomsur War erupted in 1846. "*The very year [1846] the Kandhas of Ghumsar again made a rebellion and the government again suspected Somanath Singh, the King of Angul. They accused him of helping the Kandha rebel leaders and although there was no positive proof to establish the guilt of the Raja, suspicion against him was deep rooted. In the beginning of 1847, Cpt. McPherson and his assistant Camdenhead reported that their camp at Kusumghar was attacked by the Kandha leader Nabaghana Kanhar with the aid of the King of Angul. In December 1847 the British issued a proclamation annexing Angul and a warrant was issued for the King's arrest. The son of the King, Prince Locanath Samanth, betrayed his father and informed the British that seven hundred of the King's Piaka soldiers had gone to Kusumghar in aid of the Kandhas.*"[CCXXXIII]

Records reveal that this 1846 Kandha uprising was under the leadership of Chakra Bisoi. "*To put down the Kandha uprising under Chakra Bisoyee of Ghumsar the British*

[CCXXXIII] **Angul District Administration Webportal**

government had taken stringent measures."[CCXXXIV] For nearly ten years Chakra Bisoi led his Kandha warriors against the British. In the years of direct hostilities against the British, "*Dara Bisoi and his nephew Chakra Bisoi took shelter in Bisoipada [now known as Bisipada] and continued their guerilla warfare against the British. From their Chakra Bisoi carried on his armed depredations in adjoining Ghumusar and in parts of Dasapalla and Nayajarh. He succeeded time and time again in evading the pursuit of the British troops and those of the Boudh King."*[CCXXXV] The struggle has been described as fierce and sporadic in nature and the areas of operations were the vast expanse of inhospitable jungle terrain. The insurgents could sustain the rebellion for the protracted period of ten years, even in the face of the superior military strength of the British.

The Kandha insurrection fizzled out by 1856. British officers S.C. McPherson, John Campbell, Mac Vicar and Mac Neil successfully put down the Kandha insurgency. It was towards the end of this second Ghumusar War that the British officially annexed Kandhamal in 1855. In 1857 Dina Kandha and Lochan Kandha led another revolt against the British. It was not until 1884 that the British were able to finally and fully extinguish the military capabilities of the Kandha tribes.

Since the arrival of the British, the Kandhas have been in an ongoing state of war. They continue to struggle under a burden of social and economic deprivation. Government efforts to protect the forests were another factor that severely impinged upon the productivity of the Kandha. The double edged sword of military defeat and economic disenfranchisement brought about a state of misery. As their condition became desperate the Kandhas lashed out at their oppressors.

The British were not the only targets of Kandha aggression. The Kandha at times turned the focus of their wrath towards the non tribals as well. In 1860 the Kandhas attacked the Paikas and local Christian converts in response to a small pox outbreak. *"There are many Paikas in this district. The word Paika is the abridged form of the word Padatika or infantry. In the past, Paikas were recruited from various castes such as Gond, Bhandari and Pana."*[CCXXXVI]

The Kandhas declared war upon their Paika neighbors, believing that the outsiders were responsible for bringing the disease to the area. *"Smallpox spelt doom for the*

CCXXXIV **Oriya Speaking Feudatory States** Dr. Hemanta Kumar Mohapatra
CCXXXV **Rural Development and Political Participation Among Tribals**
CCXXXVI **Angul District Official Web Portal** '*People*' http://angul.nic.in/chap-3.htm

Kandhas of Subarnaghurry in 1860. This was identified to be a problem associated with the presence of the Paikas (an erstwhile martial caste which got increasingly involved in agriculture, and also included some who were the Christian converted adivasis) in their "country' since they were "the means of getting the Sircar and causing smallpox to prevail among them'. The Kandhas felt that if the Paikas were expelled then they would enjoy peace and comfort. About fifty Kandhas, led by Jagoo Pojaree and armed with battle axes, bows and arrows went to the village of Goomahgoodah and shouted aloud to "murder all the Paikas who hid in their houses". [CCXXXVII]

1882 saw another Kandha uprising against the non-tribals. The Kandhas rose up against the Oriyas and murdered some hundreds of them.[CCXXXVIII] The Kandha spirit of independence and their violent response mechanism continued into the twentieth century. Thus we see that in the year 1910 or 1911, according to the Indian Statutory Commission, "*A general revolt of the Kandhas and other forest tribes as result of the intrigues against the administration of the Diwan. The revolt was of a widespread nature.*" True to their nature the Kandhas took to arms once again in 1914. This rebellion took place in the Daspalla princely state of Orissa. Once again in 1920 the Kandhas rose up triggered by land alienation and the rampant exploitation by their Christian Pana neighbors. By the mid 1920's the local British administrators had developed a healthy respect for Kandha sensibilities. This is evident from a report by the local administrator to the earlier Bengal government and the later Bihar and Orissa governments. The British officials warned that any attempts at forest demarcation would cause the Kandhas to rise up in rebellion '*if their destructive forest activities were interfered with*.'

As the decades rolled by the Kandhas military capabilities were reduced to nil and their economic condition became desperate. However a majority of them clung to their traditions and simple lifestyles. We do, however, find violent episodes once again taking place in the 1980's. The immediate cause was the Christian Pana's demands and efforts to gain S.T. [Scheduled Tribe] status. It was in 1981 that Mr. John Nayak IPS (Indian Police Service) (Retd.) convinced the then Congress Party government of Orissa to submit the Christian Pana's identity as Kui tribals to the president of India's list of recommendations.

[CCXXXVII] **National Archives of India, New Delhi** Home Department (Public Branch) nos. 60-61 (A) January 24, 1861 and **Identity, Hegemony, Resistance: Conversions in Orissa œ 1800-2000** Dr. Biswamoy Pati

[CCXXXVIII] **Castes and Tribes of South India** E. Thurston, T. Edgar and K. Rangachari

Land alienation, money lenders, alcoholism and socio-economic issues related to conversion and the relative affluence of the Christian Panas all fed the tension. From November 1986 to February 1987 violence erupted between the Christian Panas and the Kandhas. According to Kandhamal police reports, thirty eight cases of communal violence were registered and a number of buildings were burnt down, including eight churches. Then in 1994 a state of war erupted between the Panas and the Kandhas. Sixteen people died and the damage to the infrastructure was enormous. According to the official statement of the Kandhamal Administration, *"There was an ethnic riot experienced by this district during the year 1994. The main issue during this period was the illegal and forcible possession of lands belonging to ST community by members of SC community. Immediate cause: Entry into Barada Balunkeswar Shiva temple at the village of Khudutentuli under Tikabali PS on 14.1.94 by Harijan(SC) member."*[CCXXXIX]

Farzand Ahmed writes in India Today magazine, "*In 1994 there were violent clashes between the Panas and the Kandhas. The immediate cause of the clash then in which 16 people were killed was the entry of a Hindu Pana youth into a Siva temple in the village of Khudutentuli on January 14th that year. The Kandha objected to it and purified the temple. The Panas reacted to this and clashes ensued and ultimately the Panas were at the receiving end. One incident led to a chain reaction and this led to a massive mobilization of Kandhas in April 1994. The Kandha youth shouted 'Wherever you find a Pana, kill him! Panas domination will not be tolerated! If it continues there will be fire!' The Panas however claim that they secured the right to enter the temple in 1960. However, the Kandhas opposition to Panas entering Hindu temples was a challenge to the Panas growing socio-economic power. This growing power created a sense of loss within the Kandhas and was a threat to the business community that controlled the society in the district.*"[CCXL]

Some say as many as 50 people died as a consequence of this violence, but official records report a total of 16 dead. The official statistics[CCXLI] of the Kandhamal District Administration are:

1. *Number of persons killed- 7 Kandhas, 9 Panas, Total 16*
2. *Number of houses burnt- 6 Kandhas, 277 Panas, Total 283*
3. *Number of persons injured- 29 Kandha, 36 Panas, Total 65*

CCXXXIX **Kandhamal District Administration Statement** regarding the 1994 Ethnic Riots
CCXL **India Today** October 18, 2008
CCXLI **Kandhamal Police Statistics**

4. *Total arrested- 98 Kandhas, 68 Panas, Total 166*

It is important to note that the bias of administrators may have affected this official tally. This could explain the impossibly low figure of Kandha houses burnt when comparing the nearly identical figures related to the dead and injured. The Christian Panas have long maintained control over the levers of power in Kandhamal. Data in relation to burnt homes is easier to manipulate than data related to casualty rates. An administration that refuses to enforce court injunctions regarding the return of stolen lands, which engages in vast false documentation scams and illegally employs and appoints government posts in direct violation of the Indian Constitution, would have no problem in manipulating the data. Thus it is quite likely that many more Kandha homes were destroyed than the 6 reported.

There was a major development related to the 1994 crisis. Due to the unprecedented political activism of the Kandhas the Janata Dal government created the district of Kandhamal as a distinct legal entity within the state of Orissa. This newly established district of Kandhamal was welcomed as a just reward after a long struggle by the Kandhas. The Kandha were pleased and the Christian Pana were dismayed.

Another incident took place on December 8 1998; the Kandhas overwhelmed the Udaygiri Police station and stormed the jail. Two prisoners were dragged from the prison and killed by the Kandhas. The Kandhas then proceeded to burn the homes of the Christian Panas. This incident was sparked by the crimes of the Christian Panas and the inaction of the police. The violence was rooted in an incident in which the Christian Panas had robbed some Kandhas of all their cash and valuables as they sought work.

Then on the night of February 9, 1999 twenty-three Hindu Kandha homes were burnt to the ground in Gajapati. The arsonists were Christian Pana Christians from the neighboring village of Jhumigaon. In retaliation the Kandhas torched a number of Christian homes in Ranalai.[CCXLII]

For all intents and purposes a state of war has long existed between the converted Panas and the Kandhas. From the beginning of their recorded history the Kandha have been a tribe of warriors. They continue to fight to this very day.

[CCXLII] **Economic Times** March 22, 1999

The character of the Kandha people is not defined by their warrior code alone. Captain Macpherson, who waged a deadly campaign of war against them, noted the humane outlook and fair-mindedness of his Kandha opponents. He writes in his *'Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 1852'* of a Kandha fable highlighting their natural tolerance and commitment to communal harmony and integration. *"A mosquito was seated upon the horn of a bull. Fearing that his weight may be oppressive to the quadruped the mosquito politely accosted him, 'O Bull, if you feel any inconvenience from my burden please let me know. If so I will be happy to move to another position.' The Bull replied, 'O Mosquito, far from oppressing me with your weight, I honestly was not even aware of your presence."*[CCXLIII]

It was this same McPherson who described the Kandhas as faithful to friends, devoted to their Chiefs, resolute, brave, hospitable, and laborious.[CCXLIV]

In this we see the Kandha mentality of live and let live. Through this we can gain a general understanding of the Kandha psychology. As long as one does not burden or oppress the Kandha, they are welcome among them. In other words, rather than seeking out conflict, the Kandha react to acts of oppression. They are fearless in times of confrontation and will rise to meet any challenge.

The Kandhas have an established reputation of honesty and a strong commitment to duty and obligation. The ancient Kandha law reflected in their saying, '*Let a man say they will give up all he has in order to repay his debt'*[CCXLV] is at the foundation of their character. Kandha society is deeply committed to fair play and honesty.

Another clear indication of the traditional Kandha outlook and nature is given by Stanley P. Rice of the British Indian civil Service in '*Occasional essays on Native South Indian Life 1901*'. *"Such men as the Kandhas and Savaras were valuable friends and dangerous enemies. Their influence amongst their own men was complete, their knowledge of their own country perfect."*

Here we find self reliance and independence to be a primary feature of the Kandha psyche. The all important phrase '*Their influence amongst their own men was complete'* is vitally important to understanding the current violence in Kandhamal. The Kandha are not and have never been a people misled or even led or influenced to act outside of

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CCXLIII **Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 1852** Captian Macpherson
CCXLIV **Ibid.**
CCXLV '**Political Institutions, being Part V of the Principles of Sociology** Herbert Spencer 1876

their own interests. When a repaid debt is denied, land stolen or an agreement is broken, the Kandha sense of justice demands fair play, retribution and compensation. If it is not forthcoming only then will the Kandhas rise up to reclaim their rights.

There are two obvious factors to be deduced from the history of Kandha resistance. The first points to the war like spirit of the Kandha people. History shows us that this is a constant within the Kandha psychology. The second factor is their undeniable role as leaders. They are masters of their own destiny and are neither the slaves nor the pawns of anyone. Decisions regarding war or peace are theirs to make and theirs alone.

Kandha Religion-Sacred or Sinister?

Any investigation of Kandha history automatically includes a focus into the horrific 'Meriah' human sacrifice cult. This aspect of the Kandha culture has horrified many. However human sacrifice appears to have been intentionally overplayed by the British for political reasons. After decades of setbacks and defeats by the wily Kandha the British seized upon human sacrifice as a justification for conquest. They trumpeted to the world their '*noble effort in the cause of humanity, freedom and the Christian way'*. Any amount of ruthlessness was acceptable in such a noble cause. In a strategy paralleling recent world events, the British declared a war against the terror of human sacrifice. Efforts were made to set up special tribunals to judge, convict and punish the guilty outside of the government legal system.[CCXLVI]

"The Kandhas became notorious, on the British occupation of their district about 1835, from the prevalence and cruelty of the human sacrifices they practiced. These Meriah sacrifices, as they were called, were intended to further the fertilization of the earth. It was incumbent on the Kandhas to purchase their victims. Unless bought with a price they were not deemed acceptable. They seldom sacrificed Kandhas, though in hard times Kandhas were obliged to sell their children and they could then be purchased as Meriahs. Persons of any race, age or sex, were acceptable if purchased. Numbers were bought and kept and well treated; and Meriah women were encouraged to become mothers. Ten or twelve days before the sacrifice the victim's hair was cut off, and the villagers having bathed, went with the priest to the sacred grove to forewarn the goddess. The festival lasted three days, and the wildest orgies were indulged in."[CCXLVII]

CCXLVI **Administration of British East India Company: A History of Indian Progress** J.W. Kaye
CCXLVII **Nation Master Encyclopedia** 'Kandha' http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Kandhas

The above quote typifies most views of the Kandha religion, thus to this day the Meriah human sacrifice cult has become synonymous with the Kandha. The reality has been forgotten and ignored. In actuality, there were two distinct branches of the Kandha religion. One did indeed engage in human sacrifice yet the other was diametrically opposed to it. The Meriah human sacrifice cult was neither the most prominent nor most popular religion amongst the Kandhas. The two branches of the Kandha religion lived separately and did not share food or water with each other. During the advance of the British forces through Kandhamal, Lt. Charles Macpherson advanced through the region; he marched *'between the tracts of country inhabited by the sacrificing and non-sacrificing sects.'*[CCXLVIII]

Remarkably the religion of the non-sacrificing sect has been all but forgotten by a majority of scholars, journalists and by history itself. It is as of the burden of shame has been intentionally and forever shackled around the necks of the entire Kandha community. This is yet another injustice perpetrated against them. They have been stripped of that which is truly beautiful and worthy and unjustly forced to bear the burden of being a murderous and barbaric people. The true religion of the Kandhas represents an evolved tradition and outlook on par with any of the major religions of the world.

Based upon the research and reports of Lt. Macpherson[CCXLIX], John Kaye informs us of the Kandha's Boora Penu, the Supreme Being, the God of Light and the source of all good. *"The Kandhas are divided into two great sects. They have certain common articles of faith. They all believe that the Supreme Being or God of Light, the source of all good, created for himself a consort, who became the Earth Goddess, and was the source of all evil. The Supreme Being, the source of good created the world and loved it; and the Earth Goddess became jealous of God's people. Then she rebelled against the Supreme Being and introduced moral and physical evil into the world and from that time there was strife between the powers of light and darkness. So far this is the common faith of the Kandha tribes. But here begins the divergence of sectarianism. The issue of this great strife between the powers of light and darkness is the grand subject of dispute between the two contending sects. The one believes that the God of light utterly overcame the Earth Goddess and has ever since held her in thrall employing her as the agent of his will- the instrument of his rule. The other holds that the Earth Goddess is still unconquered;*

CCXLVIII *Ibid.*
CCXLIX *Macpherson was later promoted to Captain*

that she holds in her hands the balance of good and evil-that the destinies of man are under her control-and that whatever happiness is vouchsafed to him is only by her sanction or concession, by the dispensation of blessings in her own gift, or the withdrawal of that antagonism which might prevent their emanation from the God of Light. And thus regarding the supremacy of the Earth Goddess, they recognize the necessity of propiation, and they believe that only by the worship of the power of darkness, through the agency of human sacrifice her favor can be purchased by the tribes. Therefore by this one great sect of the Kandhas the abomination of human sacrifice is esteemed a sacred rite."[CCL]

This division between the Kandhas based on belief was a common development throughout the ancient communities of the world. Unfortunately, Western educated scholars and popular culture tend to focus on any horrific or inhumane branch of a culture and portray it as the main feature of a tradition. The human sacrifice cult was a global phenomenon. Evidence suggests that it was a common heresy that developed much later and in direct opposition to the worship of God. The ancient Assyla Federations of Europe, Asia and Africa reflect this. They were established as an alliance of worshippers of the Supreme Being, Creator and God of light, love, compassion and goodness. The human sacrificing cults of Assyria, Carthage and others stood in direct challenge to the Assyla Federation alliance. Suffice it to say that the Kandha divide was a localized version of these contrasting approaches to religion. The irony is that both recognized the value of human life. Yet in a perverted calculation, the worshippers of darkness considered its highest value as that of a human sacrifice.

The Boora Penu and Dharani Penu concept of the Kandhas is remarkably similar to the Hindu Vaishnava concept of God and his energy Maya. In this tradition the Goddess of Illusion Maya is employed as an agent of God's will and an instrument of his rule that has been deputized to fulfill the desires of the lost souls. She does this in such a way that eventually the lost soul finds its way back to God. This entire material creation is Maya's domain just as it is considered the domain of the Earth Goddess of the Kandha. We also see quite obvious parallels with the Abrahamic concepts of God and Satan. Throughout history, the heretical and corrupted focus on Satan-like forces eventually led to human sacrifice.

[CCL]**Administration of British East India Company: A History of Indian Progress** J.W. Kaye

After the cessation of human sacrifice amongst the Kandhas, the people noted that rather than disaster they saw that their country had become peaceful and prosperous. There had been two unusually healthy seasons, and two unusually abundant harvests. The British reported, *"Providence, in this, had wrought mightily for us. The Boudh tribes viewed the result with wondering admiration. They called us Boora Penu's people-agents of the God of Light- and believed that superhuman power was in the hands of the people who had done such things. The wrath of the Earth-Goddess, it was clear, could not avail against us."*[CCLI]

The world continues to highlight the gruesome heresy of Kandha beliefs as the actual basis of their religion. Writers with the same access to the same materials, even quoting the very same works are silent about Boora Penu the Supreme Being and ultimate Creator God of the Kandhas. There is a disproportionate focus upon the practices of one sect. This has distorted the historical perceptions of Kandha culture. Either through a lack of in-depth study or through a deliberate process of omission, the true nature of Kandha spirituality has been filtered out of the historic record. Many ancient sacred traditions of the world have been artificially identified with the heresies that arose as a direct challenge to the original religion. These heresies were always much later and alternate developments. Human sacrifice also represents the decline of a people and their civilization. This has been validated by history and archeology.

After thousands of years even gold loses it luster and becomes dull. In the same way ancient cultures decline and develop irregularities. However when outsiders focus upon these irregularities, and present them as the actual tradition, they compound the social ills associated with the decline. It is just as foolish and illogical to assign the dirt and dullness to gold merely based on its sullied condition. This tactic has been used repeatedly against cultures, peoples, nations and societies. It still continues to this very day.

Not a day goes by without the mention of the Caste system and equating it with Hinduism. This is done despite the reality that every Hindu Avatar, Guru, Spiritual lineage (Sampradaya), Saint, religious leader and popular scripture of Hinduism has unequivocally rejected all forms of caste based prejudice. The Bhagavad Gita, the veritable Bible of the Hindus is quite clear in this matter. Spoken by Lord Krishna, the

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[CCLI] **Ibid.**

supremely popular God of the Hindus, the Bhagavad Gita literally means the '*Song of God'*. In it Krishna states:

Chatur varnyam maya srishtam

Guna-karma-vibhagasha

"The four divisions of human society are created by me. These divisions are based on character and action."[CCLII]

Notably Krishna uses the terms *Guna* or Character and *Karma* or Action. Nowhere does he use the terms *Janma* Birth or *Jati* Race or Clan. In direct contradiction to the Bhagavad Gita, today's Hindu caste system is entirely based upon birth, race and clan. Yet to this day the heretical version and decayed deformation of the Vedic/Hindu Varna system is presented as a valid part of the Hindu religion. With this logic one could just as easily consider domestic violence as the essence of marriage solely based upon its prevalence. In the same way the corrupt form of the Kandha religion has been blatantly foisted upon the Kandhas.

As to why the Kandhas, Hindus, Celtic Pagans, American Indians, ancient Africans and other primordial religions have been misrepresented to the world; it can be explained solely by '*Cultural Imperialism'*. For by devaluing and debasing the worth of a tradition, efforts to replace that tradition become acceptable and are rationalized as justifiable and humane. For when a culture is identified with its decayed and atrophied corruptions, attacks upon that culture are deemed as progressive acts of enlightenment. Despite identifying gold based upon its tarnished condition, its value as gold remains. It is foolish to discard that gold based upon its dulled appearance. No rationale can compensate for the loss regardless of the misguided opinions of the alleged experts.

The rich and dynamic culture of the Kandha people has been subverted by the artificial imposition of the heretical human sacrifice cult. The development of this cult represented a rejection of the original Kandha religion centered on the Supreme God of Light, Boora Penu.

As the Kandhas lost control of their economy and lands their overall infrastructure began to collapse. In 1901, the British writer S. P. Rice presented a poignant image of

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[CCLII] **Bhagavad Gita As It Is** '*Transcendental Knowledge*' Chapter 4, Text 13

the Kandha condition. He paints a sorrowful portrait of the ruin of the Kandhas, *"Here they live in seclusion and in freedom, but also in the lowest depths of squalor and poverty. Kandhas they are indeed in name —*

'Sed quantum mutatus ab illo, Hectore, qui redit exuvias indutus.'

Exuviae! They are lucky if they have one garment and that such as they can call their own! Once they loved gay colours. True Kandha dresses, both male and female, are full of stripes and patterns in blue, yellow, and red. Where has gone the love of colour? Instead of the long waistcloth ending in tails of blue and red, the man binds about him a wretched rag that can hardly be called a garment. Colour there is none, if we except that colour which a once white cloth takes on for want of water and washing. Once the women took a delight in decking themselves with flowers, and a pride in the silver ornaments that jangled on their naked breasts. Where are now the grasses that adorned them, and the innocence that allowed them to go clothed only from the waist? Gone! Withered by the blast of the breath of a "superior civilization." Alas for the poor Kandha! The slopes are crowned with dense bamboo forest and fruit trees, all preserved by the government. Here the Kandha might have been secure, but the wall of Paradise was not high enough, and Satan entered in the shape of the Uriya money-lender.

"Due entrance he disdained; at one slight bound high overleaped all bound."

The money-lenders have sucked the life out of the unfortunate Kandha. His lands are mortgaged; his trees are mortgaged; and besides his land and his trees, he has nothing. In 1884 the Forest Department took up three blocks in the Mohiri hills, comprising all the hill slopes. This was a death-blow to the Kandha. At one stroke was taken from him the power of cultivating the land in his own national way — the only way he really understands."

Stanley P. Rice closes his lament by lining the tragic plight of the Kandha with a silver lining, *"Yet here again we are forced to cry "Ichabod! The glory is departed." Gone are the hairpins of sambur bone — an inestimable treasure in the eyes of the true hill Kandha. Gone are the floral decorations and the fantastic head-dresses, which are the pride of the mountain tribes. In dull, unromantic squalor our Kandha lives, moves, and has his being ; and ever as he moves is heard the clanking upon his wrists of the fetters of his debt. Yet for all this he is happy. He is not free from the land tax; his neck is under the yoke of the Forest Department. But he is happy… He steals the firewood from the forest, and probably filches the fruit. He is happy, because his wants*

are few; he is happy in that he lives for to-day; he is happy, because it is his nature to be happy. His ignorance is bliss to him, and he counts it folly to be wise."[CCLIII]

This remarkable and heartfelt lamentation by an English civil servant of a century past is just as poignant and relevant today. The same burdens continue to oppress the Kandhas of today yet their optimism remains.

Unprecedented Mourning

After the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati along with four of his students at the Jalespatta residential school for girls, shock descended upon the entire state of Orissa. At first, the day immediately following the massacre, public response was muted. An uneasy calm prevailed in the State in the wake of the brutal killing of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. Taking lessons from the December conflagration in the area after an aborted bid on the life of the Swami then, the State Government clamped a curfew and deployed 45 platoons of police. However within that same day violence erupted when 3 churches and a vehicle were reported set on fire. A missionary school was attacked in Baliguda and in far off Sundergarh district a '*Community shed that served as a prayer hall was burnt down*.'[CCLIV]

In response to the killing, the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) issued a call for an Orissa State wide Bandh (strike/boycott). In a response of historic proportions virtually the entire State came to a halt. The official government apparatus joined in the Bandh. Schools, colleges and other institutions across the State remained closed on Monday August 25th. *"The Government, after a review meeting took this decision***."**[CCLV] The Orissa State Government prepared for the worst. More Security personnel were pressed into service and security at all Christian areas was drastically increased. All rallies and processions were canceled. Security at the State Assembly House was increased as well. *"All vital installments including churches, minority institutions, schools, bus stands and railway stations are under close watch,"* stated Police Commissioner Bijay Kumar Sharma.

Orissa's Christian leadership, for their part, demanded a CBI enquiry and claimed that they had little faith in the State's judicial inquiry. Dr Swarupananda Patra, of the Orissa

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[CCLIII] **OCCASIONAL ESSAYS ON NATIVE SOUTH INDIAN LIFE** STANLEY P. RICE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE 1901

[CCLIV] **Uneasy Calm in Kandhamal** New Indian Express August 25, 2008

[CCLV] **Ibid.**

Minority Forum and All Orissa Baptist Churches Federation stated, *"Whosoever is killing is a criminal and criminals have no religion."* He, along with other Christian leaders said they were *'pained at the heinous murder'* of the Swami.[CCLVI]

At the Swamis August 25th funeral procession it was as if the entire district had come to pay their last respects. The mass of mourners was kilometers deep. The memorial service composed of a 16 day ritual known as *'Shodasha Mahotsav'* was attended by thousands. Special prayers, sankirtan (congregational chanting of God's names), chanting of hymns, Samadhi pratishta and grain sacrifices and fire rituals were performed during the ceremony. The 'mahotsav' or ceremony was performed by 16 saints, 16 Brahmins and 108 sanyasi monks.

To the mourners, the question as to who had killed Swami Lakshmananda had been answered by the Swami himself. Despite the English language press' refusal to publish it, the Swami's statements regarding the culprits behind the previous assassination attempts had been widely publicized in the Oriya language press. Regarding the December 24, 2007 assassination attempt, the NSS (Nyayabati News Service) quoted Swami Lakshmananda, *"Yesterday's attack on my life was planned in advance and MP (Member of Parliament) Radha Kanta Nayak is directly involved in the attack."* The report continues, *"Swamiji spoke to a group of journalists while on his way to a Cuttack hospital for treatment. He said that from 1970 onwards Mr. Radha Kanta Nayak tried to eliminate him eight times. In 1986, when Radha Kanta Nayak was a powerful government officer, he attempted to bomb Swami Lakshmananda but each time the Swami survived by sheer luck. Swami also added that MP R.K. Nayak should be hung for his many crimes he has committed in Phulbani* (Kandhamal's district HQ)."[CCLVII]

To the masses of Kandhamal, the Pana Christian leader R.K. Nayak was the man behind the massacre. As their legislative representative and a former police officer R. K. Nayak was identified as the man orchestrating the entire scenario. The simmering anger amongst the Kandhas was about to explode once again.

Meanwhile in Gurujanga, the hometown and birthplace of Swami Lakshmananda, angry villagers blockaded the National Highway at Godibandha. They blamed the Orissa State Government for his death. Swamiji's only son Loknath Nath and daughter-

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[CCLVI] **Express News Service** "Christians move HC for CBI probe' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa August 28, 2008

[CCLVII] **NSS Nyayabati News Service** December 25, 2008

in-law Basanti Nath recalled his last words to them, *"My life is under constant threat but I will not back out. I will fight." This is what he told us when we last met him earlier this month. He had invited us to his Ashram to participate in the consecration of a new Hanuman Temple he was building," said Basanti. Swamiji came to this village every year on the day of Baisakhya Purnima to attend a fire ritual (yanja). In the Angul district the location of Gurujanga village birthplace of the Swami, thousands of people came out in protest shutting down traffic and coal transportation from the large MCL site. The people of Angul were doubly anguished by the death of another native son as well. Abhay Chandra Patra was one of the students of Swamiji killed in the massacre. The successful crowd control efforts of S.P. Pratik Mohanty kept the protest peaceful. In other districts of Orissa life came to a standstill."* [CCLVIII]

The response of the people of the Angul district, the hometown of Swami Lakshmananda, is a classic case scenario of a normal Hindu response. It also undermines the theory that alleges the BJP, VHP, RSS, Bajrang Dal and other Hindu groups were using the murder to foment the passions of the people. The people of the Angul district had not only lost their most famous son but had also lost another son of the soil. Yet rather than exploding into a rage the people protested in a peaceful manner. Such an aggrieved people would have been an easy target for the instigation of violence.

The alleged BJP/VHP conspiracies that have been blamed for the violence in Kandhamal should have been just as active in Angul. As a local BJP leader, the Swami's daughter-in-law Basanti Nath could have easily led rampaging mobs throughout the district, yet no such incidents took place. Since the theories of RSS organized violence are baseless, no such development could take place. Yet, according to the allegations of the media and India's entire elitist leftist combine, the Kandhamal backlash was instigated by the conspiracies of the RSS, VHP/BJP/Bajrang Dal. The long term state of war between the Kandha and the Pana was ignored as the underlying factor.

If Kandhamal violence benefits the political fortunes of the BJP, surely violence in the Angul district would as well. Since the alleged goal is the ethnic-cleansing and removal of all Christian people and institutions, surely this same goal would be pursued within the very home district of the Swami. As the alleged mastermind of anti-Christian efforts

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[CCLVIII] **Pioneer News Service** August 26, 2008

surely the '*VHP leader*' and his followers would have used the opportunity to 'cleanse' the Christians from the Swami's own home district.

India's political culture today is largely built upon perception at the expense of reality. So despite mountains of evidence confirming the Swami, the Kandhas and the Hindus overall as the victims of an ongoing and powerful conspiracy committed to discrediting their political viability, many allegedly informed people believe the false perceptions and have no time to recognize the reality.

"The response to the VHP's call for a Bandh was unprecedented, absolutely unprecedented in the history of Orissa. All communities, political parties and affiliations answered the call to the Bandh. Therefore it is inaccurate to describe the Bandh as merely a VHP Bandh. The entire State joined in. Can anyone say that the entire State is a VHP, BJP or RSS supporter? No. People who don't consciously identify themselves as politically minded Hindus were just as outraged by these murders."[CCLIX]

In the Kalahandi district mourners marched blocking roads and kept their shops closed. Markets, banks and private business remained closed as well as Government offices. A lone case of vandalism was reported as a scooter was set on fire. In Koraput district everything shut down. Schools, banks, markets, government offices and the entire district remained immobile for the full 12 hour period of the Bandh. Some protestors attacked a church in Dhanpur damaging the furniture. In Balasore district nearly 30 people were arrested after sporadic violence erupted. The entire district shut down including government offices. However candidates applying for jobs at the District Police office were attacked for violating the Bandh.

In a sign of opportunists at work three ATM machines were damaged in an attempt at breaking open the cash stored inside. Two newspaper hawkers were attacked as one was pushed and shoved and another had his newspapers burnt. A vandal smashed the glass cover of a Mother Mary icon at the Catholic Church and the offices of the Fisheries dept. were ransacked. In the Badrak district protestors damaged 4 buses and 2 jeeps at the Carmel Christian School. A Christian home was attacked but the Police chased off the attackers. Employees of the Disciple Christian Relief Center fought with protestors who demanded they observe the Bandh. Christian schools that refused to support the 12 hour Bandh of public mourning over the brutal assassination of Swami

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CCLIX **Author Interview with Times of India Journalists Rajaram Sathapaty** October 25, 2008

Lakshmananda were attacked as well. A mutton shop was set on fire after the owner refused to shut up shop in support of the Bandh.

In the Gajapati district, the Bandh was total. Due to the complete cooperation of all communities, including the Christians, there was not a single untoward incident. The situation, however, was not peaceful in the Kendrapada district. Some Christians refused to support the 12 hour Bandh. Christian merchants attempting to cash in on the lack of competition opened up their vegetable stands. After the mourners demanded they close their shops the Christians began a protest march against the protestors. Confrontation was defused by the timely intervention of S.P. Diptesh Pattnaik and D.C. (District Commissioner) Sisirkanta Panda. In Balangar district the roads were empty of vehicles, shops remained closed and protests were peaceful. In Berhampur district hundreds of people marched in protest of the killings. All roads were blocked. Not a single shop, excluding medicine shops, was opened for business. Thousands of trucks remained stranded on the Orissa-Andra Pradesh State border. The only violence reported was in the Hindu majority part of town where a motorcycle and 2 bicycles were burnt by some miscreants.

In Sambalpur district the Bandh was overall peaceful as well. However mourners were agitated and marched to a nearby church in protest. The police attacked them in an attempt to disperse the marchers. The tension rose considerably due to this police provocation. The protestors responded by sitting in the road near the church. The district's VHP leader Satyanarayan Panda challenged the police by saying, *"If you say we have violated section 144 by sitting here on a public road then let the police arrest us."* However the S.P. Sanjay Kumar and CRPF Captain V.S. Vaid assured him that they would take action against the erring Jawans that had earlier attacked the peaceful protestors. Besides this and a few other minor incidents the Bandh was peaceful and district-wide. It was observed by all including the District administration. [CCLX]

In the State capital of Bhuvaneshwar things were not peaceful. By August 26th 243 people had been arrested in the city and in its sister city of Cuttack. Some protestors had forced their way into the Khurda road railway manager's office and damaged government property. The Xavier Institute suffered a few broken windows and the Doordarshan TV station was ransacked. The offices of the NGO Niwas were also

[CCLX] **Pioneer News Service** August 26, 2008

ransacked for being '*a foreign funded front group*.' The mourners were disturbed that the Xavier Institute refused to observe the Bandh and that the TV station had ignored the brutal murders of the Swami and his followers. Doordarshan TV refused to report upon them. Strangely the TV station showed no such restraint regarding the attacks upon Christian buildings. It was as if Hindu lives were of lesser value than Christian buildings. The Times of India was blatant in its disregard for human life and completely disregarded the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda and his students as a newsworthy item. The news was not reported upon. Once the backlash began, however, Times of India led the pack in running daily and gruesome stories detailing the alleged Hindu fanatic assaults against the hapless innocent Christian minorities.

Throughout the city and district, protestors blocked all major roads and blocked all travel. Exemptions were allowed for medical patients or for anyone else in need of medical care. Beyond that, for all intents and purposes travel came to a standstill during the Bandh's 12 hour period of official mourning. In the holy city of Puri the Bandh was absolutely total. Swami Lakshmananda was highly respected and considered as a revered seer by the people of Puri. The traders and business community downed their shutters as a mark of respect. The observance was spontaneous and observed peacefully throughout the Puri district.

Throughout the State of Orissa the 12 hour period of mourning was spontaneously observed by millions upon millions of people. Significantly most cases of violence were directly related to the callous refusal of some to observe the Bandh. The media, however, specifically the English language media referred to the Bandh observers as "hooligans' and 'vandals.' Portraying the violence in an out of context manner as 'acts of miscreants' the media ignored the instigation by some Christians and others. Times of India borrowed a term from the prejudiced pen of University of California Professor Ananga Chaterjee, blaring the headline '*Vandals run amok in twin cities'* and the Statesman characterized the protests as '*Bandh turns into hooligan's day out'*.

By waving the red flag of callousness in the faces of the aggrieved supporters of the murdered Swami, the opposition was able to gain political mileage out of the violent responses they had stimulated. The media did its part to reinforce the trivialization of the inhumane massacre as it trumpeted the *'inhumanity, shame and horror'* of the damaged buildings of the Christians.

In the Eye of the Storm

The relative calm and shock that immediately followed the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati exploded into a violent rage. Within 3 days after the August 23rd assassination, the Kandhas, convinced that the Christian Panas had killed their Swami, went on the warpath. For them it was not just a random attack but rather this was the latest and deadliest in a series of such attacks. As far as they were concerned, by killing their mentor, the Christian Panas had upped the ante. To them Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati was not just a VHP leader or a Hindu preacher. He was their Shaman, guide, teacher, advisor, council and friend. He was an anchor of tradition that kept them rooted in their tribal identity and a guide to help in the navigation of the turbulent legal, economic and political waters of the Indian system.

The Panas had their pastors, their thousands of churches, foreign funds and the backing of the UPA's Central Government and Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament, R.K. Nayak. For all intents and purposes the media acted as a Christian Pana mouthpiece and thus they operated with impunity and a total disregard of their Kandha neighbors. But the Kandhas; they had their Swami. To them it was good and proper that the BJP, India's largest political party respected and supported him. They were glad that the well known Hindu activists and organizations such as the VHP counted their Swami as one of their own. And it was fitting that the RSS, the world's largest indigenous and traditionalist organization supported Swami Lakshmananda's efforts to restore the Kandha's tribal traditions and culture.

For the Kandhas, Swamiji was their doctor for he instituted many free medical infirmaries for their people. For the Kandhas, Swamiji was their professor for he opened many free government accredited schools and colleges throughout the district and beyond. For the Kandhas, he was their agricultural advisor for he taught them how to grow organic food, to replenish their sacred soil and maximize their yields. To the Kandhas, Swamiji was their marketing manager and economic advisor for he taught them to market their products as a collective and to budget their economies. To the Kandhas Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati was their legal advocate for he personally accompanied nervous tribals to the government offices, police stations and courts to ensure them of their rights. And finally Swamiji was a wise elder and saintly seer for he helped restore countless tribal shrines and revive the ancient spiritual, sacred and common historical bonds between the Kandhas and the non-tribal Hindu communities.

As the significance of the loss sunk in, the ancient fires slumbering in the Kandha breast burst forth. Kandhas attacked the homes of Christian Panas along with their churches, prayer halls, community centers and other places. Kandhas clashed with fully armed CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) forces as well. Overwhelmed with anger and a rage born out of helplessness they did not consider the dangers of battling fully armed professional soldiers.

By the 26th of August a full scale uprising had overwhelmed Kandhamal. 11 people had been killed including 3 who had been caught up in a blaze in Tianga village. Another man was attacked and stabbed to death in Mandakia. In a clash between two large groups of Christian Pana and Kandha 5 more people were killed. The media claimed the deaths were caused when the police opened fire on the warring parties. Others say that the 5 died in the clash between the conflicting parties or perhaps as combination of both the police firing and the riot. However the police are adamant that they never fired upon the rioting groups.

Later that evening, the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik refuted the allegation stating that, *"There are reports of an exchange of gunfire between two parties. 4 bodies were found at the spot"*

A Christian Pana man was found murdered in Brepanga. In Mandakia 3 more Christian Panas including a Christian leader were found burnt to death, victims of a Kandha attack. Meanwhile in the same town's marketplace, a Kandha man was severely wounded by a group of knife wielding Christian Panas. 20 people were injured in the Barakhrama clashes as Pana Christians attacked their villages' Kandha minority areas.

Despite representing 52% of the districts population, the Kandha do not always represent the majority population within a given block or town within the district. There are several areas where the Kandha live as the local minority group surrounded by a much larger Christian Pana population. So for all intents and purposes the entire structure of the conflict is based upon opportunistic attacks upon various pockets of minority groups. At one location that minority group will be a Christian Pana and in another a Kandha. The actual dynamic of the conflict is simple and practiced by both contending parties. It consists of large groups seeking and locating smaller groups of the targeted party. Location of the targeted group is followed by capture and then the torture and finally killing of the victims. Brutal, inefficient and merciless, a kind of raid

warfare consisting of mob attacks and revenge killings swept through Kandhamal. At times the victims were Pana Christians and at other times the victims were Kandha Hindus.

In Rupagaon a Kandha youth was captured, doused with petrol and set aflame by a group of enraged Christian Panas. Across the district, Christian Pana and Kandha homes, Christian Pana Churches, Kandha temples, prayer halls, shops, government buildings and schools were set ablaze. In Phiringia 2 government buildings were set on fire and the vehicles of Phulbani Superintendent of Police and Central Intelligence were damaged by Kandha attackers.

Upon the discovery of documents of an alleged Pana Christian conspiracy to kill Swamiji, infuriated Hindu Tribal villagers of Betikala area went on a rampage. They stormed into the Betikala Catholic Abbey the next day when copies of the original documents came into their hands.

Beyond Kandhamal, in the neighboring Gajapati district a police jeep was torched and 3 churches damaged. An attempt was made to attack the General Secretary of the VHP Praven Togadia as he returned from the funeral services of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. The timely intervention of Paramilitary forces removed the threat and he was able to leave the district unharmed.

Some criticism has been leveled against the VHP leadership for organizing the funeral and memorial services of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. In a scenario that represents an interesting twist of logic, the Swami is always presented as a VHP leader. It goes without saying that the death of any group leader requires commemoration and observation by that group's membership. Yet the media contorted the entire affair into *'The VHP's Pravin Togadia was permitted to lead the funeral procession spewing hatred and inciting communal violence."*[CCLXI] When asked as to whether Togadia had directly issued calls to violence or actually used hate speech during the funeral, the author admitted he had not.[CCLXII] Despite this fact, the media intentionally and unjustifiably colored the occasion in an ominous and negative light.

CCLXI **Hindutva's Fury against Christians in Orissa** Economic & Political Weekly Pralay Kanungo September 13, 2008

CCLXII **Author Interview with Pralay Kanungo** September 25, 2008

In Kendrapadam, two Bajrang Dal activists were hospitalized in serious condition when five of their party had been cornered and attacked by a mob of Christians in Dobhanda village.[CCLXIII] 1,500 marched in protest of the murder of Swami Lakshmananda in the town of Raigada, in Gajapati district. There was no violence reported yet the tribal and minority community (Christian Panas) were in a confrontational mood. A rumor of an attack turned out to be false and police clamped section 144 or martial law in Raigada and Jairang Blocks for 2 days. [CCLXIV]

It is remarkable that despite the confrontational mood no untoward act took place even with 1,500 aggrieved Kandha on the march. Yet when smaller groups of Kandha march violence ensues. Analyzing the pattern we find that when smaller groups of Kandha are active, the Christians quickly pursue and attack them, usually by rock throwing and at other times with guns. The Christian Panas target them from a safe distance with hit and run tactics. It is after these kinds of attacks that the Kandha marchers become an enraged mob. Eyewitness accounts bear this out. The march of 1,500 Kandha mourners represents the typical expression of a mournful protest. No Christian Pana dared to assault such a large group.

Rumors play a significant role in the outcome of an event in communally charged environments. 80% of peace efforts are accomplished by the squelching of false reports and attacks. As the rumors flew fast and furious, the State authorities were severely tested as it attempted to address the situation. Violence continued unabated. In Tikabali a Kandha woman was nearly burnt alive by a group of Christian Panas. In revenge approximately 30 Pana churches were ransacked in Tikabali and Baliguda. Irate mobs of Kandha set fire to the homes of the Pastors and other Christian Pana leaders. In Gosaninuagaon a group of Bajrang Dal relief workers were attacked by Christian Pana. They fled the spot but their motorcycles were set on fire by their assailants. A group of journalists were attacked in Bargarh by a crowd that had been infuriated by misleading news reports. The tribals set fire to an abandoned Catholic Church in Bisipili. In Sambalpur, Pastor Pravakar Munna's motorcycle was torched and a prayer hall ransacked.

We get an up close look into the Kandha side of the conflict from the experience of Rupesh Kanhar. *"He (Rupesh Kanhar) lives near the jungle and is a fierce member of the*

[CCLXIII] **New Indian Express** August 27, 2008
[CCLXIV] **Ibid.**

Kandha tribe. There are 15 people in the meeting including Rupesh's friend Bhimraj. They are working out plans to attack Christians. The meeting concludes that they will not kill Christians, but scare them into leaving Kandhamal. He hasn't killed a Christian, but has burnt some houses down. In a few hours Rupesh and his friends will attack…The group will assemble at 9 pm, about 200 of them. They will have axes, swords, machetes and torches."[CCLXV]

The above scenario fits into the overall picture developed through a series of personal investigations and interviews. It represents the mood and modus operandi of a typical modern day Kandha tribal war party. Not particularly blood thirsty yet practical in their approach. The Kandhas have a tactical approach. They want the Panas to leave Kandhamal and return to the plains of Orissa, the land from which they had originally come.

According to the testimony of an Oriya journalist who frequently visits Kandhamal and spoke on the condition of anonymity, *"I have many friends amongst the Kondhs and I actually spent time with them as they strategized and organized their attacks. They have an organized approach to their efforts. In their view the Christian Panas killed their Guru. They sent letters threatening to kill the Kondh Chief and leader Lambodhar Kanhar. They are obviously targeting the Kondh leadership so the tribals replied by targeting their leaders. The Kondh also target any well known Christian Pana trouble makers and miscreants active in oppressing the Kondh people. The Kandha have war councils in which they discuss which Christian Panas targets are nearby. If there are any Christian criminal types nearby they develop an attack plan to capture them. They make their way to the site and call their enemies to present themselves. If they refuse the Kondhs burn them out. As soon as they come out the Kondhs grab them and beat them. Most of the Kondhs never want to kill anyone but they do want to scare the Christian Panas and beat them. Importantly the Kondh do not just attack any church merely because it is a church. When there is a particular nasty Father or Preacher the Kondhs specifically target them for punishment and burn their church down. My Kondh friends personally prefer to convert churches into Hindu temples by putting the orange Om flag on their roofs. Kondhs always plan their strikes and decide who and what to attack. That is how and why we were first became suspicious and then quite sure that some Christians were burning their own churches and homes. When a church goes up in flames and Kondhs did not do it yet are blamed for the act then it dawns upon them that, 'oh so the Christians are burning their own*

[CCLXV] **Tehelka Magazine** Volume 5 Issue 36 September 13, 2008

buildings.' If not the Christians than perhaps the Maoists are behind those mysterious attacks."[CCLXVI] In the present scenario it is quite a logical conclusion.

Meanwhile the administration succeeded in organized the first meetings between the warring parties. After nearly six weeks of violence, the first successful meeting took place at the end of September 2008. Meetings were arranged to meet with both the Pana Christians and Pana Hindus. As noted earlier Pana Hindus were also targeted in the Kandha-Pana clash.

"After a month of relentless violence driven by ethnic and communal passions, the tribals of Kandhmal on Sunday decided to join the peace talks. Separate talks will be held between the administration and representatives from Christian and Hindu Christian Pana communities. Senior government functionaries have made arrangements for organizing the maiden joint meeting involving tribal Kandhs, Dalit Christian Panas and Christians at Phulbani on Monday. "I appeal all of you not to engage in any act of violence for at least a month so that the government can fulfill some of our demands. If rioting continues then the administration cannot settle forged caste certificate and land alienation issues," Lambodar Kanhar, secretary of Kui Samaj Samanwaya Samiti told a convention of tribals. 'However, if the government does not keep its promises then we will again give a call to all of you to fight for our rights. In such an eventuality, the agitation would be much more intense and nobody can stop us,' he warned, as the audience of around 1,000 tribals cheered him. Christian representatives and Hindu Pana community leaders, meanwhile, ventilated their grievances and demands at a meeting chaired by SC, ST welfare secretary Taradutt."[CCLXVII]

Here we have direct evidence that the Kandhas and the Kandhas alone issued the call for insurrection.

Police Files

"The police in Gochapada arrested seven RSS supporters for their 'alleged' role in the attacks on Christians. There are virtually no Christians in Gochapada, so the arrests were bold by Kandhamal standards. On September 15, barely days after the arrests, over a thousand people marched to the Gochapada police station. It was 11 pm and pouring rain. 'We ran. What else could we do? I had just gone to bed. By the time I rose, they had snatched away my shirt. I had put my mobile phone and some money in the shirt pocket. My men fled. I tried to fire, but my

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CCLXVI **Author Interview with Oriya Journalist** October 3, 2008
CCLXVII **Times of India** *'Kandhmal violence: Tribals to join peace talks'* September 29, 2008

revolver jammed in the rain. So, I too fled. My colleague, sub-inspector Ramakant Patra had learnt that an attack was being planned on the police station, so he went on sick leave just days before the attack. The mob came with so much petrol and kerosene that they could set fires even in the rain. A police jeep, a van, a motorcycle, bedding, files, furniture, everything have been torched. The Gochapada station is in shambles. I am seeking a transfer, till then I'm biding my time,' Sub-inspector of Gochapada, Kandhamal Police Narayan Raut."[CCLXVIII]

By August 27, 2007, 3 people were arrested in connection to the killings. William Digal, Vicky Digal and World Vision employee Pradesh Kumar were being held for questioning. Christian Pana leader R.K. Nayak, Rajya Sabha MP and head of the Orissa chapter of World Vision had been named by Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati as the prime instigator behind previous attacks. Suspicions against him increased amongst the Kandha community. A report regarding the arrest of World Vision employee Pradesh Kumar appeared in the daily Pioneer newspaper. *"The police have arrested Pradesh Kumar Das an employee of World vision, a Christian charity, from Khadagpur while he was attempting to escape from the District at Buguda. In another drive 20 other persons including Vikram Digal and William Digal have been arrested from the house of Lal Digal, a local militant Christian, from Nuasahi at Gunjibadi, Nuagaon. They have admitted to having joined a group of 28 other assailants.*[CCLXIX]

In fact the Police had little to do with the capture of these suspects. A few hours after the murders, a vehicle carrying about 20 people was seized by Hindu and Christian tribals in Barakhama. The group matched the police descriptions of the killers. The tribesmen turned the suspects over to the local police who subsequently released them all. This further outraged the Kandha's sense of justice. On August 24th, two Christian Pana men were handed over to the police. They had been hiding in the house of Lal Digal, a man with a long criminal record. Black cotton masks and weapons had been seized from them. The two allegedly confessed to their involvement in the murders.

Journalist Rajarama Satapathy disclosed that, *"Some of the local people captured some suspects and turned them into the Police. 4 people were turned over to the Police early on right after the murders. They were nabbed in different villages. They had blood stains on their clothes and black masks. 7 to 10 suspects are reported to have escaped in a 407 Tata vehicle. The Police gave chase. There was an exchange of gunfire. On August 26th over 400 tribesmen surrounded a*

[CCLXVIII] **Tehelka Magazine** Volume 5 Issue 41 October 18, 2008
[CCLXIX] **Pioneer News Service**

Christian village suspecting it was sheltering 12 of the Swami's killers. Armed CRPF Jawans led by the DIG Police raided the hideout after a gun battle. An arms cache was recovered. Two CRPF Jawans were killed in the raid. Two Kandha Hindus died in the crossfire."[CCLXX]

As various power groups contended for power, the Chief Minister became a frequent target of violence. In the weeks after the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, the Chief Minister of Orissa, Naveen Patnaik received recurring death threats. On September 12th, the Chief Minister's office received a letter from the Maovadi Sangha, Paschim Orissa (West Orissa) threatening to kill the CM. A week earlier, a phone call was made to the Orissa Bhavan in the National capital of Delhi in which the CM's life was threatened. In the third week of September some Christian Pana suspects were arrested for threatening the life of the CM.

An aspect that went completely unreported relates to the earliest clashes that took place after the murder of Swamiji. As reported earlier, rioting and violence did not really erupt until almost 48 hours after the killings. Key questions have been raised as to why the police did not set up road blocks to apprehend the killers. Official police response was that they overwhelmed by dealing with rioters. However there were no riots on August 24th, 2008.

It is notable that a few days before the killings the CRPF security team assigned to Swami Lakshmananda were withdrawn. According to the students of the residential school and site of the assassination, the security forces had ordered all nearby shops to be closed just before the murders took place. The two armed police on duty left together for dinner leaving two remaining unarmed guards. In spite of the recent death threats against Swami Lakshmananda, the authorities withdrew his security team.

Between August 10th and 21st 2008, Swamiji received three threatening-letters from an unknown "*Pahadia*" group. The first two letters threatened him of abduction and strong punishment in the forests. The third letter categorically threatened him of death.

Swamiji lodged FIR (First Information Report) in this regard with the local police station and brought along the letters. All newspapers and TV channels reported upon the news of the letters. An attack by Christians took place against Swamiji's student Madhu Baba near Tumudibandha for protesting against a cow being slaughtered.

CCLXX **Author Interview with Rajaram Satapathy** October 5, 2008

Swamiji responded by staging a roadblock and hunger-strike in protest. Police accused him of flaring up tension and threatened him with stringent action.

The Christians held a meeting at Padangi Church on August 14, 2008. Twelve potential Christian mercenaries attended it for briefs. It also included three Christian CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) personnel. Suspicious villagers had apprehended some of their vehicles, noted their license plate numbers. A TATA-407 vehicle with plate number OR08D-0675, YAMAHA MOTORCYCLE plate number OR 12A-0353 a HERO HONDA PASSION bearing No. OR-12-3235. When the concerned citizens handed them over to the police, the Christian police officer in charge did not take cognizance and let them off.

August 15, 2008: The armed CRPF security personnel deployed at the Ashram, after the attacks on him last December, are withdrawn. Within days of the withdrawal of the CRPF personnel, the personal security man provided by the police, who had saved his life in the December 2007 attack, was replaced.

August 21: Swamiji returned to Jalespatta after a health-check up at Cuttack.

August 22: Swamiji goes to the police station to inform about the death threat letter, lodges another complaint and enquires about the steps taken. The officer-in-charge trivialized his concerns accusing him of being overly cautious.

August 23, 2008 morning: The personal security staff provided to Swamiji by the police goes on leave in the morning without any substitute. Swamiji was assassinated later that evening.

Finding a letter claiming killings of more Hindus and Kandha leaders at the site of the massacre allegedly penned by the Maoists, the police had immediately proclaimed the Maoist guilty of the killings. Public opinion and the media derided this theory. The Christians were the prime suspects in the assassination. Police protection was placed upon all Christian institutions. In the eyes of the Kandhas, it was as if the police were refusing to protect their Swami yet went all out to protect the Christian Panas.

Eyewitnesses testify that outrage over these points developed quickly. Thus the first acts of Kandha violence were directed, not at the Christian Panas but at the Police. Before any churches were attacked the police were attacked. During the funeral of

Swamiji the police were blocked from coming within 20 kilometers of the ashram. A number of tribals attending the funeral verbally lashed out at the police.

Times of India reports on the early violence directed against the Police, *"...at least 2 police outposts in the Nuagaon and Pasara areas were also attacked*." In an article, ironically entitled '*All Equal at Relief Camp'* Times of India wrote, *"Even on Friday entry of 2 Hindus sparked tension inside the camp, with Christian refugees turning angry. Police saved the situation by taking the duo into custody*."[CCLXXI] Obviously all was not equal and Hindus fleeing for their lives were not welcome.

In another incident on August 30th thirty Christians attacked some Hindu students in Jeypore. Some anti-Christian graffiti had been spotted on the college campus. Outraged Christians entered the campus and attacked the students. Word of the attack spread and large crowds gathered. They charged at the Christians and pelted them with stones. Suddenly the Police arrived and began shooting at the Hindus. When the Christians attacked the college, the police were nowhere to be seen thus the Hindus were forced to defend themselves. As the college students were being rescued from attack by the Christian mob, the police arrived and began shooting at the Hindus. Two Hindu youth were seriously wounded. Yet media reports stated that the Police were forced to shoot them in the defense of Christian Pana. This further incensed the Hindus who then set the police station on fire. An armored police truck was set on fire as well and destroyed. The vehicle of the S.P. was smashed.

Another noteworthy incident relates to the Italian citizens that were in Kandhamal during this time. The day after the assassinations, on August 24th they sent a fax to the Chief Minister of Orissa who subsequently evacuated them. A Senior IAS (Indian Administration Service) officer arranged a safe passage back to Bhuvaneshwar that same day. The two were said to be 2 Jesuit Priests and were in Baliguda, the same sub-divisional HQ where Swami Lakshmananda was assassinated.

People pointed out that the police were so efficient to help the Italian Priests yet failed miserably when it came to protecting their own citizens. Some rumors suggested that perhaps these Italians were priests by day and assassins by night. Either way, three days later the Italian Embassy in New Delhi thanked the Government of Orissa for their quick response in providing safe passage for the Italians.

CCLXXI **Times of India** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa August, 30, 2008

Despite this, on August 28th, the London Times stated, *"The Rome based Missionary agency Misna said that it had received reports that 2 Jesuit priests had been abducted in the area but had no further details*." Days after the Jesuits had faxed the Chief Minister and had been safely removed from the district and a full day after the Italian Embassy had sent an official statement of gratitude to the State Government of Orissa the London Times highlighted the two Italians as being abducted in Kandhamal. The article entitled *'Vatican Condemns anti-Christian violence in by Hindu Extremists in Orissa,'* featured the alleged abduction as filler for its article castigating the Hindus.

Oddly the article also mentions rape long before any such incidents were reported to have happened. On one hand the London Times reported on an abduction of two priests long after they are safe and on the other hand mentioned rape nearly 5 weeks before any rapes were reported in the Indian media. *"Followers of the VHP, the extremist group for which Saraswati was a figurehead retaliated through attacks on scores of Christian targets including murders, rapes and the destruction of dozens of Churches*."[CCLXXII]

It was reminiscent of the infamous BBC 9/11 live reporting. The BBC reporter is on live speaking of the collapse of Tower 7 a full 20 minutes before its collapse. Remarkably the very building declared collapsed is standing tall behind the BBC reporter as she informs the viewers of its recent collapse.

"An astounding video uncovered from archives shows the BBC reporting on the collapse of WTC Building 7 over twenty minutes before it fell at 5:20pm on the afternoon of 9/11. The incredible footage shows a BBC reporter talking about the collapse of the Solomon Brothers Building while it remains standing in the live shot behind her head."[CCLXXIII]

Attempts to explain BBC's ability to report upon an event before it happened collapsed as the evidence confirmed the facts of the incident.

"If there was any remaining doubt that the BBC reported the collapse of Building 7 over 20 minutes before it fell then it has now evaporated with the discovery of footage from the BBC's News 24 channel that shows the time stamp at 21:54 (4:54PM EST) when news of the Salomon Brothers Building is first broadcast, a full 26 minutes in advance of its collapse… objections can now be easily dismissed by the addition of the News 24 footage confirming that the news that

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CCLXXII **Times of London** *'Vatican condemns anti-Christian violence by Hindu extremists in Orissa'*
CCLXXIII **YouTube** *'BBC Reported Building 7 Collapse 20 Minutes Before It Fell' www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7SwOT29gbc*

Building 7 had collapsed was prematurely reported by 26 minutes. Since the BBC obviously had a source for this information, though they refuse to acknowledge exactly what that source was, it can be surmised that the news took a few minutes to make its way to the on air anchor, therefore we can approximate that someone knew Building 7 was going to collapse at least half an hour before it fell. However, if we factor in CNN's Aaron Brown reporting that Building 7 "has collapsed or is collapsing" at 4:15PM EST, then that's over an hour before the building imploded into its own footprint."[CCLXXIV]

It was as if a pre-ordained script had been written and events erupted as if on cue. We see the same exact scenario being duplicated in Kandhamal. The entire focus is obviously meant to discredit the BJP and to empower the Trojan horse of native born Western ideologues. As the Kandhamal violence increased, the propaganda campaign against Orissa, Hindu activists and the people of India intensified.

In the US, UK, Italy and elsewhere, State Assemblies and Parliaments addressed the '*atrocities against India's Christian minorities'.* The Italian authorities, ignoring Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's personal assistance in the evacuation of the two Italian Jesuits and other overall efforts to restore law and order, the Italian Government and Parliament, castigated the Indian Government. Demanding action on behalf of the Christian Panas, the Italians focused upon the Kandhamal crisis solely based upon the Christian identity of the people involved.

"Italy's Foreign Ministry will summon India's ambassador to demand "incisive action" to prevent further attacks against Christians that have left 11 people dead in Orissa, the Italian government said on Thursday. A statement issued after a cabinet meeting also said Italy would ask France, the current EU president, to take up the issue of attacks against Christians at a future meeting of foreign ministers."[CCLXXV]

For many Indians, these incidents of foreign interference on behalf of one group of Indians above another seemed strange. It appeared to confirm the suspicions that many Indian Christians have been divested of their sense of National loyalty. As bomb blast after bomb blast took its toll, 400 Assamese villages burnt to the ground with over 50 dead and nearly 3,000 Biharis drowned, the uproar over Kandhamal's Christians seemed disproportionate.

[CCLXXIV] **Prison Planet** '*Time Stamp Confirms BBC Reported WTC 7 Collapse 26 Minutes In Advance'* February 28, 2007

[CCLXXV] I**BN-LIVE News** '*Italy's Govt to summon Indian Envoy over Orissa attacks'* August 31, 2008

As the weeks went by, tensions between the police and the Kandhas had exploded into a state of full-on war.

"The Orissa State Government has found itself in a piquant situation after the Kandhas decided to take up arms and take revenge on the police for taking a partisan role. The Kandha leader Lanmbodhar Kanhar warned the Government 'In the name of appeasing the Pana Christians, don't go on arresting the innocent Kandha.'[CCLXXVI]

By August 26th, in an effort to restore law and order, the government of Orissa issued shoot-on-sight orders in eight places of the Kandhamal district.

Within the aftermath of Swamiji's murder, 14 out of Orissa's 30 Districts were affected. 300 villages damaged, 4,400 houses burnt, 50,000 were made homeless and over 30 people were killed including 2 Christian Pastors, 10 Priests, Pastors and Nuns injured. 18,000 Kandha and Christian Pana men, women and children were reported injured, 151 Churches destroyed and 13 Schools and colleges were damaged in the aftermath.

Targeting the Hindus

"Curiously, the state police did not act on the threats received by Lakshmananda. Last week, he received an anonymous letter that threatened to liquidate him. He lodged a formal complaint with the Tumudibandha police station, but the district SP had ignored his misgivings." Yahoo News

By the end of August, Kandhamal was in flames. Every blow struck by the Kandhas was magnified around the world. Presented as an attack by modern day vandals, the shame of Indian civilization, the distortions drowned out the reality. Every violent act of the Christian Panas is ignored and if reported upon at all, is presented as *'the justifiable response of an embattled peace loving member of a downtrodden minority.'*

In the aftermath of the December violence, the toll was massive. Hindu tribals suffered tremendously and in much larger numbers than the Pana Christians. The Pana Christians allegedly destroyed the shrines of Hindu Tribals, said Dr. Laxmikant Das, who has been working in Kandhamal for last one decade. He says that the icons of the village Goddess, popularly known as Dharani Penu, were forcefully thrown away by the Christian hooligans. About two hundred such incidents have occurred with the last

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[CCLXXVI] **Pioneer News Service** September 18, 2008

four years. In the December 2007 planned violence by the Christian Panas, the tribals were the worst affected in the area. About 500 Hindu houses had been burnt down, five temples had been destroyed, two Hindus had been murdered and about 400 Hindu families fled their homes to save their lives. One Shiva temple of Brahmanigaon, one Hanuman temple at Jaleshpatta, one temple of Goddess Dharani Penu at Tumudibandh, one Shiva temple at Baliguda and one Hanuman temple at Daringbadi had been severely damaged by the Christian Panas. Similarly two Hindus were brutally killed. One Khageswar Mallik, aged about 30 years, of village Barakhamba was murdered by the pelting stones of his Christian attackers. Another Hindu of Brahmanigaon, namely Sethi Taili was killed by the Christian Pana. Villagers of Gadapur and Kitingia had taken refuge in the forest in order to save their lives. No relief reached them from the State government. These distressed and helpless Hindus had to sleep under the open sky.

On December 30, 2007 hundreds of Kandha wrote a joint letter to the Chief Minister of Orissa in which they appealed to him not to send them back to their villages. In a state of fear they stated that their lives were not secure in the hands of the evangelists and their Christian Pana followers. They demanded proper security for their lives and faith equal to the special treatment being given to the Christian Panas. This is the forgotten reality regarding the riots of December 2007. Rather than the Pana Christians, it was the Hindu tribals that were the worst affected.

"Interestingly, all the houses burnt or damaged in Gadapur village strife are of Hindus except one Christian family. The name of this Christian person is Prabhakara Behera (head master of a private high school) whose family was absent during the incident. Ironically, all the Christian institutions such as society of St. Vincent Depait Health Care, Churches etc. remained unaffected or untouched. It is pertinent to mention here that, Gadapur is a Christian dominated village of Kandhamal district. Christians have attacked the Gadapur villagers is two spells i.e. on 25th and 27th December 2007. Soon after the communal flare broke out in Brahmanigaon on 25th, Christian community from adjacent areas come out in large numbers (about 300 to 400) having pistols, guns, sticks, weapons etc. in their hands and shouting anti-Hindu slogans. [CCLXXVII]

In an effort to undermine the State government and gain political capital in the post-assassination violence, Opposition leaders pointed out the fact that the Hindus were not

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[CCLXXVII] **Justice on Trial Kandhamal Fact Finding Mission** Kandhamal Root Cause, February 7, 2008

safe. *'Even Hindus not feeling Secure under this Govt: JB' "Not only non-Hindus, even Hindus are not secure under this Government, said leader of the Opposition J.B. Patnaik and criticized failure of the police to give protection to 85 year old Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati."*[CCLXXVIII]

In early September, responding to a bomb threat, the police were rushed to the famous HQ of the Mahima religion in the Dhenkamal district. The Mahima cult is an integral part of the Kandha culture. It plays an important role in the preservation of the tribal society and reinforced the self confidence and self reliance of many tribal people. To this day it is seen as an anchor of the regions unique heritage. In these tense times it has regrettably become a target of aggression. "*Sadhu Lambodhar Das of Mahima Gaddi said an anonymous caller threatened to blow up the Temple and Ashram around 11 AM on Tuesday, 'I picked up the phone and a man asked about one of the Seers in the Ashram. When I replied that the Seer was not around, he started giving threats and said he will blow up the Mahima Gaddi because they considered it was working against the Christians. According to ERA News Network the caller also threatened to kidnap 2 leading Sadhus (holy men) of the Mahima Temple for being obstacles to conversion. In Balishankar, Sundargarh Christians attacked a temple and set fire to the main door. The culprits ran off before they could be apprehended and the fire was doused before it could spread.*"[CCLXXIX]

As mentioned in the last chapter, a group of 30 Pana Christians attacked some Hindu students at Vikram Dev College in Jeypore. They were angered by some anti-Christian graffiti. The attackers, who were not students at the college, entered the campus and viciously beat some Hindu students as they spread terror throughout the college premises. A student leader, Sanjay Dash recounted to the Times of India, *"The whole thing seems pre-planned. First some unknown party wrote some objectionable graffiti inside the college campus. Then in response Hindu students were attacked. Next thing we know the police are on the hunt trying to track down Hindu students as the culprits in the whole affair."*[CCLXXX]

Pioneer News Service reported on an attack against a Hindu temple, *"S.P. Narsingh Bhol said unidentified persons tried to torch the main door of a temple at Sagbahal…"* This was not the only attack on a Hindu holy site in the Sundargarh area. Miscreants broke into a Hanuman temple in Peruapada and damaged the deity of Hanuman. [CCLXXXI] Laxmi

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CCLXXVIII **New Indian Express** *'Even Hindus not feeling secure under this Govt: JB'* August 30, 2008
CCLXXIX **Times of India** September 5, 2008 and **Pioneer News Service** September 16, 2008
CCLXXX **Ibid.**
CCLXXXI **Pioneer News Service** September 16, 2008

Narayan Baba, a leading tribal Guru, was threatened with death. *"The Maoists have already been targeting him as he is trying to reconvert the people to Hinduism in and around Mahendra Giri or Mahendra Mountain. It has been confirmed by the police and Intelligence."*[CCLXXXII]

"Police said a group of unidentified people shot at the Hindu Kandha Manoj Pradhan near his home at Laburigaon village on Saturday night. Although the attackers fired 5 rounds, only 1 bullet hit him. Pradhan was undergoing treatment in a government hospital."[CCLXXXIII]

The media's minimizing of Hindu victimization continued unabated. When reporting upon the Christian victims, entire columns are dedicated to revealing the mental state of the Christian victim and the barbaric nature of the Hindu attackers. After the shooting of Manoj Pradhan, a large group of Kandha women organized a road blockade in protest. The Kandha were up in arms because of the arrest of innocent tribals and by the refusal of the police to arrest the Christian shooters. *"Several people, mostly women, sustained injuries after the police resorted to a baton charge to disperse a mob which allegedly was blocking a road in Orissa's Kandhamal district demanding the arrest of those involved in a recent attack on a Hindu villager. More than 300 women on Monday blocked the road near Bakingia village under the Raika Police station protesting the attack and demanding the arrest of the culprits, an official said. "Police resorted to a mild lathi charge after some protesters threw stones at the policeman.' District S.P. S. Praveen Kumar told IANS. While he said some people were injured, local officials put the number of the injured at 12."* [CCLXXXIV]

In the 2nd week of September 2008 Maoists banners were placed near a police station in Mohana, Kandhamal. Death threats were issued to 12 RSS activists including a Kandha leader named Dhanu Pradhani. On November 5th, 2008 Dhanu Pradhani was assassinated. As in other cases involving Hindu victims, in complete contrast to the police response towards Christian victims, the authorities have so far failed to make any arrests.

"One Dhanu Pradhani (35 years) was killed on 5/11/2008 (Wednesday) in Jhinjiriguda village under Brahmanigaon P.S. while working in Kumbharigaon School by three militant Christians belonging to the same area. The incident occurred at about 12.30 p.m. in the afternoon while other co-workers had gone for mid-day food and Dhanu Pradhani, a mason by profession was

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CCLXXXII **Pioneer News Service** September 16, 2008
CCLXXXIII **Sify News** October 20, 2008
CCLXXXIV **Ibid.**

about to leave for the same purpose. The three persons were assisted by two of the teachers Prasant Uthar Singh and Susanta Nayak in locating and identifying the victim. It may be recalled that within days of killing of Swamiji and others, there were wall posters targeting Dhanu Pradhani, Vikram, Arun Karji and Chitrasen displayed in Jhanjiriguda area. On the 31st October 2008 when peace committee meeting was held at the Brahmanigaon P.S. there was none from among the local Christians. Later, on enquiry Thomas Nayak, Subash Nayak, Kailash Nayak and Vikram Basturoy of Brahmanigaon area told that 'first they would eliminate the four aforesaid Kandh youth, and then only they might sit down to talk about peace'. Dhanu's murder is predetermined and brutal. The killers pumped him with 12 bullets from small arms in close range. Dhanu could not escape as there was a minor boy along with who had come to accompany him to the place of lunch. This daring act in broad day light under gaze of eye-witnesses indicates a direct challenge to the State Police who have failed to nab the local killers of Swamiji who according to the investigation numbered 18 in total. Only three from among them are shown arrested, till date. Many of the remaining 15 are loitering around freely with impunity. The Kandhs were assisting in the state sponsored peace efforts for restoration of normalcy. But the militant Christians again by such acts are inviting trouble to themselves."[CCLXXXV]

By early September Kandhas were being arrested arbitrarily. Daily laborers and wage earners remained hungry and tribal women rallied for relief. The Kandhas made an attempt to swarm relief camps in Tikabali seeking food and medicine. DG of Police Gopal Nanda recognized the plight of the public. *"People have not been able to go to work. This may create resentment. Thursday's protest was a manifestation of the people's anger against the administration."* A group of BJP leaders were arrested while on a visit to Kandhamal and alleged that the administration was acting in a partisan manner. *"Innocent people, hungry for days, are being arrested and beaten brutally. The district administration and police are working whimsically. The Christian Panas are taking advantage of the situation and getting relief. Rather than locating and arresting the killers of Swami Lakshmananda, the police have been arresting VHP, Bajrang Dal and BJP activists who are engaged in maintaining peace."*[CCLXXXVI]

On September 30th an article appeared in the Pioneer Newspaper stating that 9 Kandhas had been killed by CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) troops. Quoting a former Inspector General of the Police Ashok Sahu, the report alleged that, *"Deploying the*

CCLXXXV **Hindu Jagaran Samukhya Press Release** November 6, 2008
CCLXXXVI **Times of India** *'BJP flays govt role in Kandhamal'* Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 6, 2008

Central Rapid Action Force has further unleashed a reign of police terror throughout the district, he said, adding nine Kandha tribal, including women and minors have been shot dead by police and hundreds of innocent tribals are being victimized by the police excess. The Christian people are reportedly damaging their own houses to avail compensations from the Government and other benefits from abroad. Moreover, the police are inducing the Christians and non-tribals in Government-run relief centers, to lodge FIRs (First Incident Reports) against the tribal Hindus. Poor people are being deprived of earning their livelihoods as curfew has been clamped in the district since August 24. If such a situation continues, the Maoists will take advantage of it."[CCLXXXVII]

On October 14th a CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) officer was found murdered. It is suspected he had been killed by tribals. He was out of uniform and knowing the many dangerous players in Kandhamal he could have been killed by a number of different opportunists. However he had been killed during a time in which the Kandha had been vigorously campaigning for the removal of the CRPF. Sudden night raids and arrests on trumped up charges based solely on Christian Pana complaints combined with allegations of sexual harassment of Kandha women, theft, raids on livestock and food by CRPF troops had the Kandhas up in arms. *"CRPF are allegedly here to reduce tensions yet the CRPF presence is increasing tensions,"* stated Lambodhar Kanhar.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik stated that, *"Justice will be done against any CRPF who are involved. Whatever is correct and right will be done-equally for all."* The Kandhas under the banner of the organization Kui Samaj Samanwaya Samiti demanded the withdrawal of the CRPF from Kandhamal. Lambodhar Kanhar stated, *"Regarding anyone suspected of participating in the violence, rather than raiding and arresting them, give me a list of their names. I will turn them over to the police. The jawans had set a reign of terror among the innocent tribal population in villages. If the government has faith in my words, it should pull out jawans from the villages."* Pointing out the ongoing harassment of innocent Kandhas, he described the arrest of three school students from Sankarakhol area while they were on their way to play football at the school ground. CRPF jawans brutally caned Kandha shopkeepers at Raika town asking them to open their shops even as prohibitory orders under section 144 of the crpc were in force.[CCLXXXVIII]

[CCLXXXVII] **Pioneer News Service** '9 tribals killed by CRPF in Kandhamal' September 30, 2008
[CCLXXXVIII] **The Hindu** *'Tribals seek CRPF withdrawal, assure no violence in Kandhamal'* October 14, 2008

'Tribals to launch 'jail bharo' agitation protesting arrests'

"Alleging 'indiscriminate' arrests and atrocities by police, tribals in riot-hit Kandhamal district today resolved to launch a 'jail bharo' agitation in protest even as Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik denied the charge. The decision was taken at a meeting of tribal leaders belonging to Nikhil Utkal Kui Samaj (G. Udaygiri), Kui Samaj Seva Samiti (Phulbani) and Kui Kula Samiti (Baliguda). 'A large number of tribal men and women along with children will walk down to different police stations in Kandhamal district and court arrest," Lambodhar Kanhar, leader of Kui Samanwaya Samiti, an apex body of tribal outfits, told PTI over the phone, but did not specify when they would do so. Tribals, who constitute more than half of those arrested in Kandhamal district, alleged that the jawans used to harass women and forcibly take away food items. They demanded immediate withdrawal of para-military forces from rural pockets of Kandhamal district. Accusing the government of unleashing an attack on the community in the name of controlling the situation, the meet asked the tribals to prepare for self-defense instead of depending on the police, said Kanhar."[CCLXXXIX]

Earlier, in another incident that added fuel to the fire a 70 year old Kandha man of Jeypore was arrested for rioting. The charges were based solely on Christian Pana accusations. Elsewhere the police had attacked a large group of tribal women. On September 4th after many days of curfew, restriction of movement and the right to assemble, a non-responsive government and biased Police, thousands of Kandha women went on a peaceful march. Rather than simply accepting their list of grievances, the police attacked them with a baton-charge. Several of these women were severely injured and hospitalized. On September 5th 453 Hindus were arrested throughout the State of Orissa for joining in the public demonstrations condemning the assassinations.

On September 6th, the State Government issued rule 'cnpc-144' that prohibits any public gatherings or demonstrations. Shocked by the killing of their fellow monk, thousands of monks, hermits and yogis gathered in the capital city of Bhuvaneshwar. The police intentionally targeted them and arrested many of them as they made their way to their gathering site. Unable to ban the actual gathering, the police focused on arresting anyone attempting to join the gathering which served as both a protest and a memorial to Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. Despites these attempts thousands of holy men, monks, and yogis succeeded in participating.

CCLXXXIX **Press Trust of India (PTI)** Phulbani, Orissa October 14, 2008

Also on September 6th 5000 Kandha women surrounded the Police station demanding an end to the curfew and food relief. The siege lasted over three days and ended on the 10th. The curfew disrupted their ability to work, and to buy food and supplies. The protestors demanded compensation for loss of wages and inability to shop for groceries and basic necessities.

A month after the assassination, the Kandhas once again marched in protest. *"The tribal body demanded the arrest of the murderers and conspirators of Swamiji's killing. They also demanded a stop to the indiscriminate arrest of innocent Kandhas and the atrocious sexual harassment of the Kandha women by the police. They further stated that due to the month long curfew in many places. It has put the economic backbone of many tribal people into disarray. They are now near to starving being daily wage earners; the people in the region without work and income have not been able to feed 2 square meals to their family a day. On the other hand their Christian counterparts are enjoying their life with free food and accommodations in relief camps. They are being provided with free medicines, clothing and all other daily essentials. Many of the people at the relief camps are enjoying their lives. In places like Raika neither houses of the Christians been damaged and there are no security threats from their Kandha neighbors. In comparison to this the Hindu Kandha women, on several occasions have staged protests before local government officials like BDO's (Block Development Officer) to provide them work and food. But the officials have not taken any steps to assure them of anything. No work, no income is available to them so how can they sustain themselves."*[CCXC] *"The plight of the Hindus was so severe that over 5000 tribal women lay siege to the BDO demanding equal treatment on par with the Pana Christian.*[CCXCI]

This was not the only such incident. Earlier over 30 Hindu tribal women were arrested and severely treated for participating in a demonstration against the arrest of 2 Kandha youth. [CCXCII]

Pana Hindus have been repeatedly targeted during the conflict. Vested interests have latched upon the Kandhamal calamity as yet another religious conflict. Nonetheless these attempts to manipulate the crisis are powerless to transform the actual events. As a battle between Kandha and Pana raged on, religious identity soon became meaningless. Oriya Journalist Basudev Mahapatra gives a first account of the situation.

CCXC **Odisha Today** October 19, 2008
CCXCI **New Indian Express** September 8, 2008
CCXCII **Express News Service** September 20, 2008

"When the violence is termed communal across the globe, few astonishing facts came to notice while I visited the relief camp in Tikabali. Even Hindus were attacked; their houses were torched after being looted. Many Hindu families stay in the said relief camp. A Hindu inmate Jubati Digal has lost all her belongings as the tribal members of her own village looted and ransacked her house on 27th in the night and torched her house on 28th in the midnight. Jubati heard the attackers talking - 'we will not allow the Panas (SC community of the district) stay with us'. The attackers looked for Jubati's husband Rajendra Digal to throw him into the fire. Somehow, Rajendra escaped from the place and managed to reach Tikabali Relief Centre. This is not the lone case. Bhisma Digal of Tengedapathar has come across a similar Situation. Knowing that he is a Hindu, the tribal mob torched his house."[CCXCIII]

Another incident that should remove any doubts regarding the media-secularists-minority-human rights groups- anti-Hindu prejudices. It is also a verifiable case of the governments' and police department's Christian favoritism. On September 19, 2008, *"…a complaint of another gangrape victim has come as a shocker. This time a 22 year old Hindu woman in Tikabali has fallen victim to the heinous deeds of miscreants. The incident occurred on September 13th at Gadrangia village about 15 kilometers from Tikabali. The victim was waylaid by 5 persons when she had come out of her house at 9 PM. She was gagged and dragged to a nearby bushy area before being gangraped. Kandhamal S.P. Praveen Kumar said the woman lodged an FIR (First Incident Report) the next morning and named 5 persons. One of them Manoj Pradhan was arrested immediately."* [CCXCIV] The names of the other suspects are Ananga Pradhan, Tuna Pradhan, and S. Digal. As the world media focused on a Catholic Nun's unsubstantiated claims of rape, the National media ignored the plight of this young 22 year old Hindu rape victim.

Carrying Pictures of Chairman Mao

"Maoist ambitions in India now extend to the farthest reaches of the country and this not just a fantasy or an aspiration, but a strategy, a projection, a plan and a program under implementation. The Maoists inventory of immediate tasks include coordinating the 'People's War' with the ongoing armed struggles of the various 'oppressed nationalities' of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and other parts of the Northeast.'." South Asia Intelligence Review [CCXCV]

[CCXCIII] **Xing.com** Basudeb Mahapatra September 1, 2008
[CCXCIV] **New Indian Express** 'Another Rape Singes Orissa' October 5, 2008
[CCXCV] **South Asia Intelligence Review** Volume 5, Number 31 February 12, 2007

There are many actors on the Indian political stage. In Kandhamal alone, there at least 10 different key players involved.

1. The Kandhas
2. The Pana (Christian and Hindu)
3. The Biju Janata Dal Party (BJD)
4. Indian Nation Congress Party (Congress)
5. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
6. The Christian Church
7. The Maoists
8. The Local Police and Administration
9. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
10. The State Administration

It has been stated that the Maoists represents the largest internal security threat to the nation. As for Orissa, the Maoists have long claimed that the State falls under their officially declared 'liberated zone'.

"March 17, 2008: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said that 15 of the total 30 districts of the State have been identified as Maoist-affected districts so far. In reply to a question raised by the ruling Biju Janata Dal legislator Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak on the issue, Patnaik said 14 revenue districts such as Koraput, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Nawarangpur, Ganjam, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal and Jajpur had been declared and identified as Maoist-affected. The Chief Minister said that the district of Nayagarh had also been included in the category after the Maoist attack and arms loot incident on the night of February 15, 2008."[CCXCVI]

As for the impact upon India as a Nation, the Maoists reflect the depths of collusion at work and expose a global nexus of complicity. In India the Maoist are generally known as the Naxalites.

Naxalite or Naxalism is an informal name given to communist groups that were born out of the Sino-Soviet split in the Indian communist movement. Ideologically they belong to various trends of Maoism. Initially the movement had its centre in West Bengal. In recent years, they have spread into less developed areas of rural central and

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[CCXCVI] **South Asia Terrorism Portal** 'Orissa 2008 Timeline' satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/maoist/timelines/index.html#orissa

eastern India. The term comes from Naxalbari, a small village in West Bengal, where a section of Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) led by Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal led a violent uprising in 1967, trying to develop a "revolutionary opposition" in opposition to the CPI(M) leadership. The insurrection started on May 25, 1967 in Naxalbari village when a peasant was attacked by hired hands over a land dispute. Local peasants retaliated by attacking the local landlords and the violence escalated. Majumdar greatly admired Mao Zedong of China and advocated that Indian peasants and lower classes must follow in his footsteps and overthrow the government and upper classes whom he held responsible for their plight. He engendered the Naxalite movement through his writings, the most famous being the 'Historic Eight Documents' which formed the basis of Naxalite ideology.

Today's Naxalites, however, have long abandoned the idealistic visions of its founders such as Kanhu Sanyal and have embarked upon a path of mayhem and brutality.

They have an operational presence in most Indian States. In 2006 the Maoists were responsible for 27% of Indian fatalities due to terrorism; whereas the Islamist Kashmir based terrorists were responsible for 41%. During the year 2008 (as of October 2008) nearly 550 people have died as a result of Maoist terrorism. Orissa in particular has seen a dramatic spike in Maoist attacks. In 2007 23 people died in Orissa as a result if the Maoist. In 2008 that number jumped to 125 by early November 2008. This rate reflects the 2nd highest rate in the entire country after Chattisgarh which lost 136. Over 165 districts in 14 States are reeling under the Maoist onslaught. These deaths represent the predatory nature of the Maoist. They kill with impunity while the media and the political Left let them get away with it.

In regards to the Maoist threat, there is a noticeable tendency towards naivety amongst many of the Hindus. They seem to reason that the Maoists represent a force that uses the wrong methods to do the right thing. Even Swami Lakshmananda and his followers reasoned that the Maoists will not harm anyone that is working for the upliftment of the poor and underprivileged. Even if this were the case, it is only a strategic consideration used by the Maoist. The Maoists depend upon the support of the common people and prefer not to antagonize them. They take on the role of an alternate support structure and network for the people frequently suffering the corruptive practices of the police and Forest officials.

The romanticized vision of the idealistic revolutionary is far from the reality. In many states, including Orissa, wanted criminals join the Maoists as a way to evade justice. In one district of Orissa alone two fugitives and a rapist are known to have been welcome into Maoist ranks. Congress Das and Ravindra Das escaped their prison but were recaptured during an anti-Naxal raid by the Rayagada Police. A rapist from Rayagada's Padmapur village was given shelter by the Maoist 'Vasadhara Committee' group.[CCXCVII]

The Maoist onslaught is intense and the casualty rate is extremely high. A day or so after the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, members of the Orissa State Assembly officially mourned the death of 76 people, including former Rajya Sabha member and MLA (Member Legislative Assembly) Jagdish Jani and the security personnel and Greyhound Commandos of Andra Pradesh. They were gunned down by Maoists as they were travelling by boat across the Balimela reservoir in Nayagarh in the Malkangiri district of Orissa.

Corruption is endemic throughout India and Orissa is no exception. In regard to corruption, Asian Age Journalist, Akshya Sahoo documented episodes of corruption amongst the Forest officials. Pointing to photos he and his team had taken he explained, *"Here you see a tribal lady has just illegally gathered some firewood from the forest. She is carrying it to the market. A Forest official is blocking her path giving her the choice of paying a bribe or the confiscation of the wood. He is demanding 8 to 10 rupees and the tribal can get about 20 rupees at the market."*[CCXCVIII]

This is just one example of the endemic corruption and predating by government employees that pushes people into the Maoist orbit. Thus there is little sympathy amongst the tribals when police and other government employees suffer at the hands of the Maoist. The Maoists also demand protection money, just at a lower rate. This is not out of goodwill but based on sound and pragmatic principles. The Maoists have a developed taxation system and maintain a low tax rate. Overall, the people feel the burden is a small price to pay in comparison to the messy, disorganized and individualized corruption of the government officials. With the Maoists, you pay and you're done. With the government officials a bribe paid to one policeman only goes that far. Many times bribes must be paid every step of the way until at the end of the road the poor tribal is left with nothing. In this environment the Maoists thrive. The alternate

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CCXCVII **South Asia Anlaysis Portal**

CCXCVIII **Author interview with Akshay Sahu** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 22, 2008

form of governance is a welcome change. The Maoists are generally careful to maintain this formula. Not only does it give them a dependable source of income, it lets them operate with impunity. The grateful population shelters them and protects them from capture. Therefore there is an unspoken agreement between them. It is this public sympathy that is the true resource of the region. It is this human resource for which the various political actors are competing.

Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (Tribal Wellbeing Ashram) VKA is another organization that has done much to improve the lives of India's tribal people. VKA is an organization dedicated to reinforcing the Indian identity of the tribes. They have developed many programs to educate and assist them through economic development. Unlike other NGOs they encourage the tribals to maintain their unique cultures, languages, spirituality and traditions. Accusations have been repeatedly leveled that the VKA is Hinduizing the tribals. This is based on misperceptions regarding religion and culture. Hindus, like most non-Abrahamic traditions, see all religious expression as authentic and its diversity as various facets of the same underlying spiritual current. For them it matters not how you worship or even if you worship. What matters is the ability to complement one another and to celebrate the diverse expressions of humanity and spirituality.

Volunteers of the VKA put aside all personal issues and agendas to encourage the tribals. I spent ten days with the VKA Director for Northeast India, Atul Jog. Despite being raised a pure vegetarian in a Brahmin family dedicated to Ganesh, he now lives and breathes the life of a tribal. He never touched liquor yet recognizing the importance of the rice wine greeting ceremonies, he now drinks it. He never ate meat or fish yet now he eats it. I asked him why, *"I was trained to be an engineer and I have a degree in Engineering. I was trained to be a Brahmin as well. These are good for me, the individual. Yet in a country with so many millions living in desperation, I wanted to do something for them, not myself alone, so I gave up my career and joined the VKA. As I mixed with the tribals, I found that I must join them wholeheartedly. Their joys became my joys, their sorrows my sorrow and their diet my diet. The people of the VKA have not come here to teach them, convert them or change them. We are here to help them in their struggles and to help them meet the challenges they face as a people. As an example the Tribals of East Arunchal Pradesh have an ancient religion called Ranfa-ism. As a tribal culture they had no written scriptures or temples, but 10 years ago one of their people, a scholar, began collecting the ancient lore of his*

tribe. Now he has published several books on their ancient religion and inspired a tribal revival. We in the VKA helped this scholar and his tribe to fulfill their own ambitions and do whatever we can to empower them to be who they are. They are the creators and we the facilitators." It is this kind of commitment to the tribal people that empowers them.

I met with this pioneering tribal scholar and Renaissance man in Hojai, Assam. He singlehandedly spearheaded a revival of his people's ancient religion. Despite being thousands of years old they had never formalized their tradition into an official religion. Recognizing that his tribal sacred traditions were in danger of extinction he gathered the ancient lore and wisdom of the elders and published several books on the religion of Ranfa. In the past his people worshiped Ranfa under the open skies yet in the modern era his people needed more. His books on Ranfa-ism had stimulated a revival amongst his people thus within ten years over 50 Ranfa temples have been built within 2 districts of eastern Arunachal Pradesh. During my talks with him, he briefly shared the essence of the Ranfa tradition with me. Despite a difference in names and terminologies, it soon became clear that this little known tribal religion of Ranfa had at its core the same truths, revelations and outlook as expressed in the ancient Vedic/Hindu traditions. Not only this, the subtle and intricate philosophy of the Ranfa tradition reveals a depth far beyond those commonly expressed by the leading religions of the world. In Ranfa-ism alone we find the proof that rather than being a superstitious and ignorant lot such tribal people are worthy and capable of guiding all humanity. I was awed and inspired by this man's dedication and commitment and by his humble and calm demeanor. I look forward to a time when the world finally recognizes the exceptional talents and capabilities of India's tribal people.

Unlike the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (VKA), the Maoists merely replace injustice with another form of it. They do nothing to restore the traditions and culture of the tribes. In fact they attempt to replace it. By feeding on the discontent and acts of the corrupt local government officials the Maoists install a new power structure that is nothing more than yet another foreign based ideology. The socio-religious infrastructures long in place are either co-opted or destroyed.

Within the past year Orissa has become a front line in the Maoist campaign against India. The Orissa Maoist experience also represents a major turning point in their overall strategic and tactical approach. The roots of this have been obscured by the media and by recent dramatic events. Within the state of Orissa alone from January 2nd

until November 6th there were eighty-eight separate calendar days in which major Maoist encounters took place. Kandhamal in particular is at the center of it all. CRPF Commandant A.K. Das stated on February 18, 2007, *"A powerful land mine weighing 20 Kilograms was detected and removed near the Adagan village on Panigauda to Jhumurigada Road. This road links to the Brahmanigaon village of the Kandhamal district and is now regularly used to transport security men who are moving towards the Kandhamal District for the Anti Naxalite operations."*

Earlier that day a massive cache of four hundred rifles and sixty thousand cartridges was discovered in the Gosama hills of the Ganjan district. Also on February 18, 2008, Orissa's Chief Minister announced a series of moves, which for all intents and purposes, represents a full scale war. Only the media and the Indian elite's blasé attitudes keep the intensity and crisis of this ongoing war from being recognized by the people. Though the media frequently reports on the Maoist attacks, no National debate has arisen. In an affront to the democratic process, the BJP's successes at the ballot are demonized as the bullets of the Maoists are trivialized and trivialized.

In 2006 the Maoists accounted for 27% of the total terror based fatalities in India. Left Wing extremism constitutes what India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has rightly described as the "*single biggest internal security challenge*" confronting the country. The Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist), today, exercises dominance over a large swathe of the country's territory and carries out attacks on security forces and symbols of governance at will. Chhattisgarh has now emerged as one of the principal centers of a coordinated Maoist movement. While the number of Maoist-affected Indian States in the country is currently pegged at 14, the movement has demonstrated the intent and potential to spread across the length and breadth of the country. The Maoist threat has now overtaken all other insurgencies in the country – at least from the perspective of geographical spread, with various levels of Maoist mobilization and violence currently afflicting at least 165 Districts in 14 States. Over the past years, moreover, while fatalities in various other insurgencies have tended to decline consistently, fatalities related to the Maoist conflict have continuously increased.[ccxcix]

"The anti-Naxalite Special Operation Group, accompanied by the Orissa State Armed Police (OSAP) Jawans, was today engaged in a fierce encounter with fleeing Naxalites from Nayagarh

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ccxcix **South Asia Terrorism Portal** satp.org

near Gasama village in Kandhamal district bordering Ganjam. About 200 armed Naxalites, who proceeded to Gasama after blowing up the Gallery police outpost, by three 407 mini truck, five Tata Sumo, one Bolero and ten motor cycles, were not able to proceed beyond Gasama as there was no road communication to Kandhamal district, police here said. The Naxalites had blocked the road at two places on 25-km-long Bhanjanagar-Gallery road. But DIG of Police Southern Range R P Cooche, Ganjam Superintendent of Police Suresh Debadutta Singh, Berhampur Superintendent of Police Nitinjit Singh, officer-in-charge of three police stations along with four platoons of OSAP had rushed to Gasama bordering Ganjam district. Seven Maoists were killed in today's encounter and many injured on Feb 17th in the continuing gun-battle between security forces and the ultras, who killed 15 people on Feb 15, in the Ganjam-Kandhamal border area of Orissa, official sources said."[ccc]

"Police sources say that there are already more than one hundred Maoist training camps functioning in Kandhamal. Besides the Maoist have their central armory here due to safety reasons."[ccci]

Police sources told the Time of India on August 28, 2008 that, *"Kandhamal has been emerging as another hotbed of the (Maoists) Naxalites who are using the dense forests and hilly uninviting terrain to hold training camps and recruit locals. Even in the Nayagarh attack in February 2008 in which truckloads of arms from police were looted and fifteen people murdered, the Maoists had used Kandhamal as their base before launching the offensive."*[cccii]

As highlighted in a previous chapter this same article revealed that large numbers of Maoists have entered Kandhamal after the violence started in December 2007. In a December 29th Times of India article titled '*Maoist Whiff in Kandhamal Violence*', *"…the current spate of violence has not come as a surprise to many for this backward district has been simmering for quite some time now, what is disturbing is reports about Maoists throwing their hat in the ring. Maoists from neighboring Gajapati and Rayagada districts have been making forays into interior parts of Kandhamal during the past few years. We have launched some operations in the past. What is worrisome however is the spotting of some men in Olive greenwear during the assault on Brahmanigaon Police Station on Thursday."* A top cop said, *"The fierce gun battle and Maoist statements against the VHP have made their role apparent. We have intelligence inputs that Maoists from nearby Chandrapur could be involved in*

[ccc] **Netindia123** February 20, 2008
[ccci] **Pioneer News Service** January 9, 2008
[cccii] **Times of India** August 28, 2008

fomenting trouble in Brahmanigaon. We warded off the onslaught only after a special ops team specializing in anti Naxalite (anti-Maoist) operations reached the police station. The feeble police presence in certain parts seems to have encouraged the rebels to take advantage." He said, "We don't rule out the possibility of Maoists taking advantage. The area is very vulnerable. We are on the alert.' DG Nanda said."[ccciii]

The Maoists are seeing an advantage beyond the tactical area. The Pana-Kandha divide is Orissa's Achilles Heel. The Maoists recognize the State's weakness as an opportunity to further its long term strategic goals.

Former DG of Police John Nayak was quoted in Indian Express News article dated back January 2, 2000, *"The Maoists are taking advantage of the existing land disputes to further their own cause…"* It is notable that this statement was made in early January 2000 by a Christian Pana police official and key figure in the current crisis. His statement was made a full six years after the 1994 riots and more than seven years before the December 2007 and 2008 violence. Here again we see affirmation of the fact that land disputes are the primary cause of political tensions in the region. The tension between the Christian Panas and Kandhas is so tangible that it has been identified as a strategic opportunity for the Maoists.

The Maoists are active on many fronts. They are mostly known for guerrilla warfare and for their pronouncements against the 'Fascist Hindus' and the middle and upper classes. However they are also active in the creation of social pressure groups. A list of several front groups that have been established in Orissa alone include the Kui Labanga Sangh, Lok Shakti Manch, Nari Shakti Bahini, the Kui Sanskrutika Sangatha, Chasi Mulia Royat Samiti, Radical Students Organization, Rajanaitaka Bandi Mukti Committee, Royat Kuli Sangram Manch and Daman Pratirodh Manch. With so many fronts and networks the Maoists have the ability and flexibility to maneuver as they see fit.

Journalist Rajdeep Roy wrote on the newsportal livemint.com, *"Another ominous note is the shadow cast by the Maoists. Religion and an SC-ST tussle are the ideal situation for the Ultra-leftists to take advantage of. Tensions have always prevailed between the two with the Kondhs looking down on the Christian Panas and very little social relations between the two.*

[ccciii] **Times of India** December 29, 2008

God help us if the Maoists get mixed up in all this," said a State bureaucrat, a senior civil service officer who did not want to be named.

Those responsible for maintaining law and order and security along the South Orissa border with Andra Pradesh are very concerned. A report by A.K. Mishra of the Indian Express News Service highlights this fact. *"Have Maoists of the KBK region established a new base in Narayana Patna in Koruput, bordering Orissa and Andra Pradesh to spread their activities to Kandhamal? This question is now haunting the Police Administration and Intelligence agencies working in both the States. The killing of two top Maoists near Narayana Patna two days back in the encounter is a pointer towards the question."*[ccciv]

An article in the Telegraph newspaper quotes a Christian Pana named Kameshwar Pradhan, *"Don't forget, he tells you, 'The Maoists have no Dharma, they will blow whatever comes in their way. And clearly they want Kandhamal."*[cccv]

The battle for Kandhamal has been waging for years. 2008 was a particularly deadly year.

All the evidence is indicative of this conclusion. In fact, as this report has illuminated, not only do the Maoists want Kandhamal, they already have it. A vast built-in network of supporters, over 100 training camps, acres of marijuana cultivation operations, a major arms depot and a central command center have all been identified within Kandhamal. Brutal attacks and arm raids against the police were planned and successfully implemented from the Maoists' Kandhamal base. Rather than mere speculation or rumor, the cold hard reality is that the jungles and hills of Kandhamal have become a major center of Maoist operations.

In response to this reality and in recognition of the tribal abilities, the Orissa State Government's Home Department passed resolution # 47958 on October 25, 2008. It stipulated the formation of an anti-Maoist task force which will train tribal youth aged 18-25 in an armed combat anti-insurgency effort. They will be required to pass STD III level of education and receive full police training. After two years of active duty, the youth will be eligible to join the police and other branches of the Security forces.

[ccciv] **New Indian Express** October 13, 2008
[cccv] **Telegraph News** October 13, 2008

Interestingly the Maoists' Marxist based vision for India has its roots in British Imperialism and Evangelical extremism. As noted earlier, Christian Imperialist William Wilberforce had great contempt for Hindu culture and openly called for its demise. India's British rulers developed a variety of schemes towards the reinforcement of its control over India. Early British restrictions on Christian Missionaries were not based upon altruistic objectives, but rather upon practical concerns regarding management and control. The British rationalized their conquest of India through the formulation of the Aryan Invasion Theory (AIT). This theory portrayed an ancient Indo-European race that colonized both Europe and India. Artificially placing a racial identity upon the Aryans enabled the British to downgrade India's indigenous societies and concurrently buttress their dominion over India.

Karl Marx's strong antipathy for Hindu culture and society were based upon these two Imperialist constructs. Marx, perhaps can be forgiven for having only second-hand access to India, yet today's Marxists are maintaining Western domination as the Left hand of Western imperialism. Marx's theories on India were based upon false premises specifically designed to uphold British control. After over 60 years of freedom, Marxist theories indemnify and maintain Western ideological and social control over India. The three headed creature of British Imperialism, Evangelical Extremism and the two-faced political Left, the Marxist ideologues and Maoist terrorists continues to undermine Indian progress. They share the common goal of substituting the Indic foundation with Western based systems of governance, religion, education and social order.

The Communist Left has been envisioning the desolation of India's ancient Hindu civilization since its inception. Marx was quite open about his bias against Hindu India, *"England has to fulfill a double mission in India; one destructive, the other regenerating - the annihilation of the old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundation of western society in Asia."*

Prominent writer and journalist M.V. Kamath specifies the foreign fixation of India's modern day Marxists.

"The observations of the various British officers in India which were ultimately put before the House of Parliament by the East India Company for the year 1812 formed one such consolidated report. The details of village life given in this report have formed the basis of various sociological theories on Indian village system and its economy for the last two centuries. It is on the strength

of this Report that Karl Marx and Maine drew their conclusions of an Indian village and formulated their theories of ' `oriental despotism and primitive Indo-Aryan commune' respectively. Marx certainly knew little about India and her history and its value system. Marx was not a sympathizer of imperialism or capitalism. But he could not conceal his western bias and prejudices against Indian culture, which is evident from his writings of 1853 and about his expectations of the role the British had to play in India. He writes: "England has to fulfill a double mission in India; one destructive, the other regenerating - the annihilation of the old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundation of western society in Asia."- First published in New York Daily Tribune, August 8, 1853.

This fact explains why Indian socialists of all hues and Marxists of all denominations are busily occupied in anti-culture activities - from history to literature. They are zealously fulfilling the dreams of their master! Marx was obsessed thoroughly to westernize India by uprooting all its ancient systems of governance, of society and culture. According to Marx, Indian life had always been undignified, stagnatory, vegetative, passive, given to worshipping nature instead of putting the man on the pedestal as the sovereign of `Nature'. Karl Marx writes: "Whatever may have been the crimes of England", in India, "she was the unconscious tool of history" for the desired changes. - New York Daily Tribune dated June 25, 1853. The views of Marx on India (in 1853) were actually the reproductions, continuations and extensions of the views expressed earlier by William Wilberforce in 1813, by James Mill in his three-volume History of British India (first published in 1817), and by Lord Bentinck and Macaulay in their Minutes around 1835."[CCCVI]

Kandha War against the Maoists

"Naxalism is pure and simple terrorism, which disguises itself with terms like "class struggle" and "social justice" Naxal Watch

A question has arisen as to why the Maoists have joined with the non-tribal Christian Panas. This is perplexing especially when we count in the fact that the tribals represent the traditional support base for recruits. The answer to this riddle goes back to the Kandha's 2002 declaration of war against the Maoists.

In an event that served as a major blow to the Maoist agenda, the Kandha tribes went to war against the Maoists. The Kandha effectively cleansed the Maoists out of the region. The news media and alleged supporters of people power refused to report on the

CCCVI **Mission Impossible** 'Putting an End to Conversion Activity' M.V. Kamath 1999

triumph of the common tribal over the guns of the Red Terrorists. This is strange coming from a media that allegedly thrives on stories of conflict. Yet the media is absolutely silent about this significant development.

Jawarhal Nehru University researcher Rajat Kumar Kujur states that the founder of the Kui Shanti Sena, Daku Majhi began his efforts to eradicate Maoist terror in 1998. He ran for office and became the Chairman of Chandrapad Block in 2003.[CCCVII] He again ran for office as an Independent candidate in the 2004 General Election for the Gunpur Assembly constituency. As a leader of a mass movement, champion of the Kandha tribe with a spectacular success rate, he was on his way towards winning the election. However on April 24, 2004, the Maoists followed through on their threat and assassinated him and severely wounded his brothers as a warning. *"April 24, 2004: Naxalites of the PWG (People's War Group) kill an independent candidate, Daku Majhi, from Gunpur Assembly constituency and injure his two brothers at Maniguda forests in the Rayagada district of Orissa."* [CCCVIII]

"Probably the first organized attempt to counter Naxals (Maoists) in Orissa was made by the "Kui Shanti Sena", which was led by an estranged Naxal leader, Daku Majhi, during 1998. Even Daku Majhi contested elections and became the Chairman of the Chandrapur Block in 2003. Initially, he was able to organize tribals against the Naxals and police saw a friend in him. 'We were sympathetic with the Shanti Sena initially, but we never promoted them.' However the experiment was short lived, as the government did not know what to do with the Shanti Sena and Daku Majihi was eliminated by the Sabyasachi group on April 24, 2004 during the General Elections."[CCCIX]

The Kandha led movement suffered a setback without the leadership of Daku Majhi yet the campaign against the Maoist terror and oppression continued. Nihar Nayak, a Research Associate at the Institute for Conflict Management based in New Delhi, details the Kandha-Maoist conflict in a special report published by the South Asian Terrorism Portal entitled *'Maoists in Orissa: Growing Tentacles and a Dormant State.'*

CCCVII **Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies Special Report**
CCCVIII **South Asian Terrorist Portal** satp.org
CCCIX **Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies** Special Report on Left Extremism in India: Naxal Movement in Chattisgarh & Orissa June 2006

"In the last couple of years, however, the Naxalites are losing support among their traditional bases, particularly with the tribals. This is primarily due to the lumpenization of the movement. In 2003, hundreds of tribals in the Rayagada District, who once protected the PWG, virtually declared war against them. Having decided to rid their area of the Naxalite presence, they have formed the Kui Shanti Sena (Kui Peace Army). "We are against the Naxalites who are exploiting and looting the tribals. They are not revolutionaries. We can have peace only if we drive them away," declared Dakoo Majhi, Chairman of the Kui Shanti Sena. In response, the Vashadhara Regional Committee of the PWG accuses the Sena of being a Police front and has threatened to kill Majhi.

The fear of Naxalites had long prevented people from entering the paddy fields in Rayagada district, which affected the tribal economy, as about 90 per cent Kondh and Soura tribals depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The PWG operatives, who until recently swore by the ideology of Mao and Marx and went out of the way to protect the interests of the tribals, gradually began extorting money from them and also exploiting them in other ways. Once the tribals realized that the Naxalites had not only failed to deliver on their promises but were actually using them as pawns in their war against the state, they reacted sharply. The extortion and violence against tribal men and women by the PWG cadres added fuel to the fire. Naxalite activity was checked to a large extent by the Kondh tribals in September-November 2003 resulting in the arrest of 10 and surrender of 30. This tribal reaction has now turned into a relatively large-scale revolt, which can be gauged from the fact that approximately 5,000 tribals of Chandrapur and Gudari Blocks, under the banner of Kui Kondh Santi Sangh, have been generating awareness among the people of the problems faced by them due to the Naxalites. In the months of August-October 2003, the tribals organized meetings and attacked Naxalite hideouts 10 times. Around 118 Naxalites were arrested and about 50 surrendered, with the help of tribals, till August 2004. Further, about 5,000 Kondh tribals gathered in the Nandi and Dhaniput villages of Chandrapur Block on October 28, 2003, and vowed to spread the anti-Naxalite movement in the district. On October 15, 2003, a thousand villagers of Siriguda, Balipanga, Resam and Rengulguda raided Naxalite hideouts in Chandrapur and Gudari, caught seven Naxalites and handed them over to Police. The Kondhs have also captured 22 Naxalites in the Rayagada district.

These are only a few incidents, which indicate that the tribals, who were counted among their most ardent supporters and protectors, have decidedly turned against the Naxalites. The Police Chiefs of Malkangiri and Rayagada have stated that, with the help of tribals, the Left Wing extremist problem in the two districts had been brought under control to a large extent in the

year 2004, as compared to previous years. The Police are now trying to cultivate the tribals as their allies in countering extremism in the southern districts of Orissa. The state is thus using a judicious mixture of force and other efforts to bring back the tribals into the mainstream of socio-economic development."[CCCX]

The enmity between the Maoists and Kandha tribals created the dynamic for a Maoist-Christian Pana alliance. Despite ostensibly allying with the Christian Panas the Maoist's political agenda never changed. Its goals remain the same. Put simply, the Kandhas became an obstacle and the Christian Panas became a means for removing that obstacle. From the Christian Pana perspective the Maoists became a powerful weapon to use against the Kandha. The Christian Panas thus joined hands with the Maoists, a group diametrically opposed to the very idea of Christianity.

In relation to the conflict between the Maoist and the Kandha tribals, several statements made during the December 2007 violence take on a new significance and relevance. The *Justice on Trial* fact finding mission reported that, *"The Christians of the village fired blanks and threatened Gadapur's Hindu people to flee from the village. If by evening they did not leave their houses, then Naxals will come and burn the houses. Fearing for their life, villagers went to the nearby jungles in the evening and miscreant-Christians came with fire and torched the Hindus' houses. As Christians are in majority in the surrounding areas, they attacked the villagers on 27th December again. In the process many houses and shops have been damaged completely and no property could be rescued. Government of Orissa has provided tents and rations to all the affected homeless victims. Christian community people of the village alleged before the committee that, first, Hindus burnt our Maoist SHG (Self Help Group) on 25th night and thereafter the commotion started between both the communities, but Hindus said, Christian community people were having their feast for x-mas on that day and fire might have caught during cooking but they don't have any role to play in it."*[CCCXI]

We also have further evidence of Christian Pana-Maoist collusion from media reports on the December 2007 riots. *"There are two NGOs working in our village who are behind the attacks. They have been publicly saying that they have links with the Naxalites (Maoists) and will drive away all Hindus with their support."*[CCCXII]

[CCCX] **Maoists in Orissa Growing Tentacles and a Dormant State** Nihar Nayak www.satp.org/satporgtp/publication/faultlines/volume17/nihar.htm
[CCCXI] **Justice on Trial Kandhamal Fact Finding Mission** Kandhamal Root Cause, February 7, 2008
[CCCXII] **NDTV** January 10, 2008

In this light, the Times of India report, quoting an IGP rural officers statement regarding the Kui Labang Sangh Maoist group actively supporting the Pana Christians is relevant. *"We have seized 12 guns from the Brahmanigaon area and the influence of Kui Labang Sangh in the attack is apparent."*[CCCXIII]

By 2007, the Christian Pana-Maoist alliance had developed into a formidable force. The anti-Maoist movement begun by Daku Majhi in the late 1990s undermined the dependability of the Maoist's tribal recruitment base. As early as January 2000 the Police were aware of the Maoist attempts to capitalize on the Pana-Kandha divide. Having been cleared out of 2 districts by the Kandhas and the Saravas, the Maoists required a centrally located safe zone. Kandhamal's terrain and its sizable nontribal community of Christian Panas, who coincidently were nursing ancient grievances against a mutual Kandha enemy, provided the Maoist both cover and a new and reliable source of recruits. For the Christian Pana, the Maoists provided protection and a new source of opportunities starting with the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati.

In this vein, Ajai Sahni of the Institute of Conflict Management stated that, *"Naxals may not have anything to gain but they could have realized that the reconversion drive of Lakshmananda was hitting at their base of mass mobilization."*

The August 27th edition of the daily Pioneer newspaper headlined a story with the title, *'Swami's killing establishes Maoist-minority community link.' "The deceased swami was a symbol of the Sanatana Dharma and successfully stood for the cause. So, finding no way out of to stop such a man who was preventing conversions in the district, the minority community with the help of the Maoists killed him at his ashram, alleged Mahanta Krushna Charan Dash Goswami, president of the Matha Mandir Suraksha Parishad on Monday. He also stated that some of the politicians were hand in glove with the Maoists and the minority community. The administration could not provide the requisite security to the swami despite the threat to his life as he had already lodged an FIR (first incident report) in the nearest police station following (the receipt) of a letter allegedly written by the 'mountain group'. On the other hand, the administration is ready to provide security to the minority community at the slightest hint of apprehension for their institutions, rued Goswami. The Swami was killed by the assailants who were having the links with the Maoists as they were carrying AK-47 guns which are often used*

CCCXIII **Times of India** December 28, 2007

by such groups and certainly not by anti-socials. Goswami also questioned the credentials of the UPA Government at the Centre and Congress president Sonia Gandhi for maintaining silence on the brutal killing of such a prominent religious leader."[CCCXIV] Goswami's observations were soon borne out to be accurate.

The Maoist leadership's decision to work in tandem with the cause of the Pana Christians has created a wedge in Maoist ranks. Angered with a sense of betrayal over the murder of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, Hindu Maoists formed their own Maoist reactionary group. By early 2009, a new Maoist splinter group had been formed in Orissa.

"The police in Orissa believe the killing of Lakshmananda Saraswati has split the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist), with some Hindu members breaking away to form a rival group called the IDGA-Maoist. In fact, the new group has called for a Bandh in Kandhamal, Gajapati and Ganjam districts on January 3 when it will formally come into being. Some posters of the new group have been spotted in Kandhamal. "We are keenly watching the formation of the new group," said DIG Sanjib Panda. The police said IDGA-Maoist is an acronym for "Idealise of Democrat Garila (Guerrilla) Army (Maoist)". The breakaway IDGA's posters have denounced the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), the military wing of the CPI-Maoist, and its leader Sabyasachi Panda for the VHP leader's death. Though it is yet to be established whether the splinter group would actually take off on January 3, police officials admit there have been rumblings in the Maoist ranks after the Swami's killing on August 23. In October, CPI (Maoist) leader Sabyasachi Panda had told a few media persons that his cadres had killed Saraswati for trying to convert tribals into Hindus. "We had asked Lakshmananda to desist from anti-Christian activities. He created a riot in December 2007 and subsequently targeted people indulging in cow slaughter," he had said. "It is a fact that Christians are in majority in our organization. Our supporters in Orissa's Rayagada, Gajapati and Kandhamal also belong to the Christian community," said the DIG. "The persons who have broken away could be Hindus. Everything would be clear after the January 3 Bandh call," he added."[CCCXV]

Maoist Bomb Buds

"Over the years, the cultivation of hemp or marijuana (ganja) in the hilly areas of the interior has been a major source of finance for the CPI-Maoist. On November 19, 2007, police personnel, excise and revenue officials had to trudge across 12 kilometers of inhospitable terrain to Kudanali

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CCCXIV **Pioneer News Service** '*Swami's killing establishes Maoist-minority community link*' August 27, 2008

CCCXV **Express News Service** '*Hindu Maoists form new group, say Orissa Police*' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa December 31, 2008

and a neighboring village in the Naktideul Block of Sambalpur District, before they could lay their hands on hemp cultivation spread over 20 acres of land. Police destroyed the hemp plants valued at INR 160 million." Orissa 2008 Assesment, South Asian Terrorism Portal

Marijuana (ganja) is a major source of revenue for the Maoists. The police and anti-insurgency forces have been discovering vast growing operations in the hills and jungles of Orissa. *"…on November 22nd 2007 6,000 marijuana plants valued at INR 25 million were destroyed in the forests of Khajuripada and Sunajhari in the boudh district*." [CCCXVI]

Nihar Nayak of the Delhi based Institute for Conflict Management gives a detailed description of the methods used by the Maoists. *"According to a Malkangiri Police report, every year over 10,000 quintals of ganja (marijuana) are produced in the hilly terrain of Orissa-Andra Pradesh under the Kalimela and Chitrakonda Police limits in the District. In fact, cultivation is done round the year in the worst Naxalite-affected tribal pockets of Janvai, Pepermetla, Gopagunda, Maliguda, Podia and Manbakonda. The consignments of marijuana are smuggled out by tribal conduits to markets across State borders via jungle routes. Generally, ganja is packed in small quantities and the couriers evade the police by road travel and later transport it to other areas, according to Deputy Inspector General of Police, B.B. Mishra. The common routes are Malkangiri-Boipariguda-Kotpad-Jagdalpur-Raipur(Chattisgarh), Chitrakunda-Machkund-Nandapur-Dasmantpur-Indravati-Bhawanipatna-Bargarh; another route is Malkangiri-Jeypore-Nabarangpur-Bhawanipatna- Bargarh. Official sources informed that as most of the operations are carried out from inaccessible naxalite-infested neither the police nor the excise department is able to effectively monitor these activities. The Naxalites derive substantial benefits from these activities."*[CCCXVII]

Details in this regard were featured in the Prajatantra Weekly's March 14-20, 2004 edition and in the New Indian Express on July 31st, 2004. In relation to Kandhamal the intrigue and web of entanglement runs even deeper. A Times of India article dated August 26, 2008 points to the corruption and collusion at the highest levels. *"Kandhamal had witnessed the abortion of a similar operation earlier when the District SP Satish Gajbhiye launched a crackdown on illegal ganja cultivation in interior areas, part of the proceeds of which was reportedly being channeled to the criminal network of Maoists. Barely had the operation*

[CCCXVI] **2008 Orissa Maoist Assesment Report** South Asian Terrorism Portal
[CCCXVII] **Maoists in Orissa: Growing Tentacles and a Dormant State** Nihar Nayak

began, the government ordered Gajbhiye to withdraw. A vague explanation was later given that he had been transferred."[CCCXVIII]

Rajaram Satapathy, the author of the Times of India article stated in an interview with this author, *"For years this marijuana growing was taking place. Throughout Kandhamal the Senior Police were totally unfamiliar with the crop and it was being grown with impunity. However a new young SP was assigned to the District and he was stunned to find marijuana being cultivated in blatant violation of the law. He saw that 100s of acres of land throughout the District marijuana was being grown. Then he discovered that part of the money from the proceeds was being channeled to the Maoists. It was being grown by the local people and even some Government officials were growing it as well. The Christian Pana youth, jobless and poor developed a fascination with the Maoists and saw the opportunity of working with and for the Maoists…And Kandhamal is the latest place where they are consolidating their position. The marijuana growing was a major source of revenue for them. SP Satish Gajbhijye's intelligence inputs verified this so he saw he was in a position not only to stop illegal cultivation but also to have a detrimental impact on the Maoists. So he raided and destroyed many marijuana fields. I actually ran a story in which a Revenue Divisional Commissioner gave testimony in which he stated that some people from the BJD (Orissa's ruling party) are involved in the marijuana cultivation and marketing. There is a lot of money involved. The anti-marijuana operations were abruptly stopped. I have close connections with police and people in intelligence. So I asked them, 'What is going on? Why have these anti-drug operations been stopped? They replied, 'Don't ask me about that. We don't want to talk about it, but we got orders from the top. What can we do?"*[CCCXIX]

Kandhamal's burden of corruption and injustice is systemic. The law is worth less than the paper it is written upon. Officers like SP Gajbhiye are removed for enforcing the law, court injunctions are irrelevant and the very officers whose job it is to enforce the judgments of the courts refuse to do their job. The job of the courts is to weigh the facts in an unbiased manner and to stipulate the basis of the law. They are the final arbitrator. The police and government's task is to guarantee that the rulings of the court are enforced. Yet in Kandhamal the police are punished for doing their jobs and criminals rewarded. The tribal Kandhas who follow the law and appeal to the courts of law for justice are betrayed. Their basic civil rights are denied by the inability of the law

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[CCCXVIII] Times of India August 26, 2008
[CCCXIX] **Author Interview with Rajaram Satapathy** October 25, 2007

enforcement agencies to enforce the laws. The Maoists feast in this environment and flourish within the framework of misery and misfortune.

Some Dare Call it a Conspiracy

"By distorting actual events, left-wing extremists and political partisans attempt to support their prejudices. Their global grid of like-minded thinkers is legion. However when the retractions, clarifications and plain cold hard facts expose their propaganda and outright falsifications, it is too late. The excessively partisan nature of the Indian Left and the media functions within a fabricated framework. Artificial scenarios are invented as rationales for their prejudice are used as confirmation of their severe accusations. For the average citizen, not specializing in current events, the impressions have already been implanted and they remain."

Within hours of the assassination of Vedanta Keshari Lakshmananda Saraswati Swamiji, the government pinned the blame upon the Maoists. This was announced to the world long before the basics of any type of preliminary investigation had been made. This theory was instantly countered and refuted by the police themselves and the news and editorial pages of Orissa's leading dailies. *"But we are nearly certain that it wasn't the Naxalites," said an officer who was posted in Maoist-affected areas for the better part of the decade. "It does not fit their modus operendi." He said. "For starters, Naxalites supported the Swamiji's activities till recently. They hailed him as pro-poor and a messiah for the downtrodden. Why would they suddenly turn against him," he asked. Besides, the attack did not look as carefully planned as a Naxalite operation. "The Maoists know enough about warfare not to attack a crowded enclosed place where there is near certainty of collateral casualties. They would not have attacked when preparations for a grand puja (worship) were on and there were hundreds of people milling around. They normally try to avoid killing innocent civilians. There were no Maoist slogans and no propaganda leaflets were left at the scene, unlike a Naxalite operation," said the officer, reeling out a checklist. But he didn't discount the possibility of the weapons 7.62 mm assault rifles and 9mm pistols and carbines being loaned; by splinter Naxalite groups."*[cccxx] This article appeared on page 2 of the Times of India, Bhuvaneswar edition.

Then on page 3 of the same edition large headlines proclaimed, *'Maoist Claim hand in VHP leader's murder'. "Under fire from a section of the ruling clique over the violence in Kandhamal, the Naveen Patnaik government has got slight relief with a CPI(Maoist) leader*

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cccxx **Times of India** 'Securitymen outnumbered, outflanked in battle zone' August 30, 2008

reportedly claiming responsibility for the August 23 killing of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and four of his followers. 'We have killed Saraswati to take revenge for the villainous role he was playing in Kandhamal,' said Azad, a leader of People's Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA), in an interview to a leading Oriya daily. 'After the December 2007 riots, Saraswati and Pravin Togadia (VHP secretary general) portrayed Christians as Maoists and attempted to defeat the revolutionary movement. Lakshmananda was taking a lead in Hindu fascist activities,' he was quoted as saying." The pages of the Times of India were used to broadcast the Maoist message far beyond its normal range, *"We ask the general public to join us in our fight against exploitive organizations," said Azad. Despite its own article on page 2 of this very same edition, Times of India writes, "Orissa's top police brass, it may be noted, had within hours after the killing of Saraswati claimed it was the handiwork of the Maoists. But this invited flak from certain quarters, including saffron outfits. These groups held 'Christian militants' responsible for the killings and accused the government of diverting attention from this incident. Following this, the government formed a special investigation team to probe the killings."*[CCCXXI]

Two days earlier Times of India published an article entitled *'Government blames Maoist, Police don't agree'*. This same conclusion was made in an Editorial by the Pioneer daily newspaper August 26th, *"Blaming the Maoists makes no sense; it is a shoddy effort to suppress the truth."*[CCCXXII] Again this same theme was promoted in yet another editorial by the New Indian Express on August 27th. *"The Government did well by promptly sending forces to all the sensitive pockets and imposing curfews, but it jumped the gun by prematurely seeing a Maoist hand in the killing. This only added to the pent up anguish of the people who strongly believe a religious extremist group is behind this gruesome act. In fact, this was the tenth attempt on the sadhu (holy man) who had vigorously protested conversion. The last bid on December 24 triggered a wave of communal violence that took days to subside and that wound has not yet healed."*[CCCXXIII]

The Statesman ran an editorial with the headline '*Mayhem in Orissa*' with the subheading '*Blaming the Maoists won't wash*.' The article firmly rejected the Maoist theory as it relished the frustration of the Hindu activists over the assassination.

"Orissa's Right could scarcely have anticipated the churning within its ranks in the immediate aftermath of the killing of a VHP religious leader and four of his disciples. The vehement

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CCCXXI **Times of India** 'Maoists claim hand in VHP leader's murder' August 30, 2008
CCCXXII **Pioneer News Service** 'Conversion Conflict' August 26, 2008
CCCXXIII **New Indian Express** 'Dark portents in Orissa' August 27, 2008

saffronite condemnation of the BJP segment of the government has exposed the bluff. That bluff was inherent in the Naveen Patnaik administration's attempt to cut corners by accusing the universal whipping boy called the Maoists for the outrage in Kandhamal. Remarkably enough, it has been called by the fundamentalist fringe of the Hindu Right which is acutely aware that the charge against the Left radical has been made without a shred of evidence in an utterly fraudulent attempt at a cover-up. If the Bajrang Dal, the VHP and the lesser known Hindu Jagaran Samukhya can demand the resignation of the BJP ministers, there is more to the ashram mayhem than what the government is prepared to accept. These Sangh Parivar constituents have a point when they stress that the partly-BJP government failed to provide security to Lakshmananda Saraswati and his disciples despite the threat letter 12 hours before the strike. The BJP's grudging support-lest it offend Naveen Patnaik- to Monday's VHP-sponsored Orissa Bandh has failed to convince civil society about its role as part of the ruling dispensation. Clearly, the government had ignored the warnings. The contrived callousness and the cover-up have been exposed with the Bajrang Dal now going hammer and tongs against a Rightist government's callousness and the attempted cover-up by blaming the Maoists. The government's response-even of the BJP ministers- doesn't quite match the enormity of the mayhem. Apart from the suspension of the SP, the reaction has been muted overall. The administration will have to identify the perpetrators who may have targeted Saraswati for his opposition to conversion and cow slaughter. Blaming it on the Maoists will not wash; arguably it may be intended only to protect the real culprits..."[CCCXXIV]

Yet, despite all the major news outlets' repeated rejections of the Maoist theory, the canard continues that '*Hindu Fundamentalists outfits'* pushed this theory. The claim is that the VHP, RSS, Bajrang Dal and other likeminded groups rejected the government's Maoist theory in order to rationalize attacking the Christian minority. Ironically it was the very anti-VHP, RSS, Bajrang Dal media that went overboard in discrediting the government's Maoist angle. Rather than the Hindu organizations, it was the media that broadcast the Christians as the perpetrators of the massacre. The Maoist themselves added weight to this theory by sending letters flatly denying any involvement in the massacre. One letter was sent to the Gajapati VHP office and another to the Shankaracharya (Similar to the Archbishop) of Puri. Red Maoist banners appeared

[CCCXXIV] **Statesman News Service** *'Mayhem in Orissa-Blaming it in the Maoists won't wash' August 26, 2008*

overnight in various places in which the Maoist clearly denied any role in the killings of Swami Lakshmananda and his students.[cccxxv]

On September 5, 2008, An Oriya daily *'Samaja'* stated that the Central Committee of the Kotagarha Branch of the Maoists refuted the allegations that they had ordered the killing of Swamiji. The Maoists did admit, however, that there was a strong possibility that some Maoists may have aided in an individual manner after accepting bribes from the Christians who had basically paid for the assassination. The Maoists announced that they are investigating the issue and any wayward Maoists will be punished severely. Another Kotgad, Kandhamal based Maoist band publicly denied any involvement in the assassinations as well.

All of these reports, editorials and pronouncements led a majority of people to conclude that the Christians had brutally murdered an elderly 84 year old holy man who also happened to be one of the most revered and well known sons of modern Orissa. It seemed obvious that the Maoist angle was being pushed in order to protect the real culprits. In other words, if the Maoists did not commit the crimes, than the Christians must have done it. The conspiracy is obvious. The very same media that trumpeted the improbability of Maoist involvement attacked the VHP, RSS, Bajrang Dal and others for reaching the very same exact conclusion. It was as if the media were intentionally instigating an aggressive reaction.

Another disturbing aspect of the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati is the day chosen for the hit. Janmashtami or Lord Krishna's birthday is called Mahotsav because it is exactly that; a Maha-great 'Utsav'- festival. The choice of this day sends an obvious message intended to shake the faith of the faithful. Yet only the faithless could believe that such a tactic can work. Hindus are raised on stories about the intentional and targeted assaults upon holy places by demonic forces, specifically during holy occasions. In fact, according to the Vedic-Hindu texts, holy places, holy people and holy occasions are the favored targets of negative forces.

This is evident in an old Hindu saying that warns to beware of the cooling sandalwood tree for its very cooling nature soothes the deadly serpent as well. In other words the very positivity of the sandalwood tree draws the deadly serpents to its shade. In a similar way, the very positivity of the sacred attracts the animosity of the profane. Thus

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cccxxv Copies of the letters and photos of the banners are in the document section of this report.

the ancient Hindu texts speak of the horrific onslaughts of evil forces during times of grand religious functions. *"The Sages said, 'Our dear Lord, there is a demon of the name Balvala. He is a very powerful demon, and he visits this sacred place of sacrifice every fortnight on the full moon and moonless days and creates a great disturbance to the discharge of our duties in the fire ritual yajna. He pollutes this sacred place by showering filth upon us.' Lord Balarama then prepared himself to meet the demon Balvala. At the time when the demon usually attacked the sacred place, there appeared a great hailstorm, the whole sky became covered with dust and the atmosphere became surcharged with a filthy smell. Just after this, the mischievous demon Balvala began to shower torrents of stool and urine and other impure substances on the arena of the fire ritual. After this onslaught, the demon himself appeared with a great trident in his hand. He was a gigantic person, and his body was like a huge mass of carbon. His hair, his beard and his moustache appeared reddish, like copper. As soon as he saw the demon, Lord Balarama prepared to attack him. The demon Balvala was flying in the sky, and at the first opportunity Lord Balarama dragged him down with his plow and angrily smashed the demon's head with his club. By Balarama's striking, the forehead of the demon became fractured. There was a profuse flow of blood from his forehead, and he began to scream loudly. In this way the demon, who had been such a great disturbance to the pious Brahmanas, fell to the ground. His falling was like a great mountain with a red oxide peak being struck by a thunderbolt and smashed to the ground."*[CCCXXVI]

This is just one of many such incidents found within the Vedic scriptures. While many commentators have attempted to distort the import of the Vedic tales as Brahmanism or Aryan racism the true significance is something very different. The Vedic literatures are accepted as virtual blueprints of the laws of the universe. Thus the story of Balarama and Balvala is a case in point regarding the constant and ongoing battle over the sacred. For the average Hindu such problems are recognized as part of life. Obstacles along the way are part of the process.

The gloating attempts at highlighting the failure of God to protect the faithful at temples, churches, mosques and on Holy days, only serves to reveal their pithiness. Merely those of weak faith to begin with, have their faith shaken by such events. It would be similar to a police officer quitting based upon the realization that criminals

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[CCCXXVI] **Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead** 'The Liberation of Balvala' ppg 167-168 A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Iskcon Press 1970

despised him. Thus it comes as no surprise that enemies of a tradition would chose a significant day to attack a tradition.

Within the past few years, assassinating important Hindu leaders on Janmashtami appears to have become an intentional design. As we know, in August 2008, Swami Lakshmananda was murdered as he began celebrate Janmashtami. Going back to 2006, Janmashtami day was also chosen for an attack. This incident took place in the North-Eastern State of Manipur, yet another vital area of strategic and sensitive nature. Terrorists killed 8 people and wounded over 50 during a grenade attack against an Iskcon Krishna temple. The attack was made during a children's play on the birth of Lord Krishna and an 8 year old girl had her leg blown off. The Iskcon guru Bhakti Swarup Damodar Swami was wounded as well. At 69 years of age, the Swami was a native son of Manipur. Like Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, he was recognized as the State's most famous son and was highly respected throughout the region. Despite being a Western educated PhD and scientist, he was not only living the tradition of his ancestors but was broadcasting it throughout the world.

His very existence was seen as an impediment to the agenda of those dedicated to supplanting Manipur's ancient Vaishnava Hindu culture. Not only was Bhakti Swarup Damodar Swami the leader in reviving Manipur's ancient Krishna culture, he organized Manipur Cultural tours throughout the world including visits to pre-war Iraq and other Muslim countries. Recognizing that the consolidation and unity of the world's sacred religions as the most important and transcendent issue of our time, he instituted the United Religious Initiative or URI. In his view, *"If the religious people of the world were to unite, the forces of division, materialism and hedonism would lose their grip upon humanity."*

Bhakti Swarup Damodar Swami planned the first gathering for January 2007. However he did not live to see the fulfillment of his dream. On August 16, 2006, Janmashtami day, as he and his community celebrated Krishna's birthday, grenades were detonated in the midst of the crowd. As the crowd watched their children enact the story of Krishna, the explosions began. Three foreigners including an American, Iranian and a Swiss national were injured in the attack. The American later succumbed to his injuries and died. A young 8 year old Manipuri girl was crippled for life after losing her leg in the blast. The Manipuri news portal Kangla online reported, *"Leaving aside the differences of caste, creed or religion, several civil society bodies, political parties, NGOs, students bodies, individuals have expressed strong condemnation to the grenade blast at the Imphal ISKCON*

temple that left five dead (3 more died after this report was filed) and injuring over 50 people including women and children on the auspicious day of Krishna Janmasthmi on August 16, 2006. However, unconfirmed reports said an unidentified group had delivered a warning to the ISKCON authorities over telephone yesterday not to host Krishna Janma celebrations at the ISKCON campus."[CCCXXVII]

Though surviving his wounds from this attack, the 69 year old Bhakti Swarup Damodar mysteriously died seven weeks later. His dedication to his ancestral culture, his efforts to create religious unification and his position as one of the world's leading spiritual scientists have left a legacy that will not be forgotten. At the end of November 2008, his United Religions Initiative (URI) successfully held a three day conference in Mayapur, West Bengal, India. His legacy lives on and his vision is alive. That gentleman of a small NE Indian State left a footprint larger than life.

In the year 2000, also on Janmashtami day a native son and tribal Hindu spiritual leader was assassinated. On August 27, 2000, Shanti Kali was celebrating Janmashtami with his students. Then in the evening, terrorists claiming to wage war in the name of Christ, belonging to the separatist group, the NLFT broke into the ashram and murdered the Guru Shanti Kali. He was targeted for refusing to convert to Christianity along with his followers. A BBC article details the incident, *"A tribal Hindu spiritual leader has been killed by separatist rebels in the NE Indian State of Tripura. Police say that 10 guerillas belonging to the outlawed NLFT, (National Liberation Front of Tripura) broke into a temple near the town of Jirania on Sunday night and shot dead Shanti Tripura, a popular Hindu preacher popularly known as Shanti Kali. The separatist group says it wants to convert all tribes people in the state to Christianity. The BBC correspondent in the region says the killing has created tension between the majority of tribals, who are Hindu and Buddhist, and the small number of Christians."*[CCCXXVIII]

The picture could not be more obvious. Within less than 8 years, three native sons who had risen to the role of leaders amongst their people, who had developed dedicated followings and also happen to be not only active but spectacularly successful in the promotion of Hindu culture, have been eliminated. In an area targeted by Christian terror outfits, Maoist terror or a deadly mix of both, these three native Hindu leaders

[CCCXXVII] **Kangla Online** www.kanglaonline.com/index.php?template=headline&newsid=33236&typeid=4
[CCCXXVIII] **BBC** news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/899422.stm

dedicated their lives to the upliftment of their own people. For that reason alone, they were targeted for elimination.

We find very similar conditions in all three Indian States of Orissa, Manipur and Tripura.

1. Ongoing violent campaigns
2. Active, ongoing and focused Christian conversion drives
3. Large tribal populations
4. Native spiritual leaders with successful track records in humanitarian and Hindu cultural activism with large local followings
5. Strategic high resource value areas
6. All targets of previous threats or attempts upon their lives (Similar to Orissa's Swami Lakshmananda, Iskcon Manipur and Shanti Kali's Tripura Temple were frequent targets of threats and protection racket money demands.)
7. All targeted for assassination on Janmashtami day

Their deaths serve the goals of anti-National forces and radical Abrahamic conversionists. The aggressive attacks parallel each other in terms of method of operation, agenda and action. For this not to be a conspiracy, is beyond belief. Slowly but surely native local Hindu leaders, active within the targeted zones, are being eliminated. Such figures were potential kingmakers whose one word could influence millions and decide the political outcome of elections. The pattern is clear. Any obstacle to the stated agenda of those dedicated to the dismemberment and debasement of India as a Nation will be removed. Any contender to the various anti-India terror groups for the loyalty of the people will be eliminated.

One question that is never asked is 'how do desperately poor groups of people transform themselves into specialized killers armed with the latest weaponry, communications equipment and advanced tactical command ability?'

If these same people applied such resourcefulness and talent to bettering themselves and the lives of others, surely the impact would be remarkable. Of course such a premise is naïve. In reality outside forces are taking advantage of the dire socio-economic conditions and seducing the poor with money, guns and a brute form of political power.

Another anomaly is the fallback response given to rationalize and excuse terrorists for their acts of oppression. Theories claiming that poverty or lack of education or infrastructure is to blame do not hold up. If this were the case the entire Appalachian region of the Eastern USA would be a seething cesspool of insurrection. For that matter a majority of Latin America and Africa would be blowing up people left and right. The aboriginals of Australia and the Hawaiians of Hawaii live in desperate poverty and have yet to detonate bombs in shopping malls and hotels. The argument is verifiably built upon a false premise. No doubt poverty and misery are components but they are not the key ingredient in the making of a terrorist. The key ingredient is the intervention of outside influences with vested interests in the area of operation. The big picture is much larger than most will believe. The canvas upon which this gruesome montage is fashioned is the entire globe and the paint itself is the blood of humanity. The many apologists, such as Arundhati Roy, Ananga Chatterji et al, twist this horror into a romanticized fantasy designed to forgive the unforgivable.

Bringing the focus back to Orissa we find the inhumanity of terrorism being funded by allegedly humanitarian NGOs. A leading Christian NGO is being investigated by the State Government of Orissa for funneling money to various Maoists terror groups. *"It has come to our notice that NGOs working for the upliftment of Christian communities also provided funds to Maoist organizations. We will look into all the aspects. We are probing into the alleged flow of foreign funds to the Maoists," said State Home Secretary T.K. Mishra. "All these issues would also come under the purview of the Judicial Commission."*[CCCXXIX] Mysteriously, a year later, the results of this investigation have yet to be released.

The depths of the collusion and conspiracy became clear when the details of a letter written by the CPI (ML) Maoists of Chalatgarh Central Committee were published in the Deccan Chronicle. 'Maoists warn unfaithful cadre'. *"A letter purportedly written by CPI (ML) Chalatgarh Central Committee has warned some of its "unfaithful comrades" of serious consequences for "joining hands with a group of local-converted Christians of Kandhamal" and killing Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and his disciples on the evening of August 23. The one-page letter, a copy of which is with this newspaper, says that the few comrades of Chalatgarh unit were carried away by the "allurement" of some local "influential" Christian missionaries "who wanted to get rid of the seer as they considered him an obstacle to their conversion activity." The letter, written in Oriya, mentions the name of the converted*

CCCXXIX **Pioneer News Service** January 8, 2008

scheduled caste community and says that its leaders had taken an oath to completely destroy Swamiji and his ashram. "Without the knowledge of the central committee, a few estranged comrades of Chalatgarh and Tumudibandh units executed the murder conspiracy. This has brought disrepute to us and our organization," the letter reads. It regrets for the incident. The handwritten letter also serves a threat to the police. "The police officials are always blaming us for creating a divide between us and the common people. We will identify and punish such officials," it says.[cccxxx]

The usual cacophony against the VHP was exposed for the propaganda it is. The Christian leaders urged the government to ban the VHP's memorial plans and alleged that the Hindus were organizing a State wide march carrying the ashes of Swami Lakshmananda. However it appeared the Christians were applying a lot of guess work in their accusations. *"VHP leader Praveen Togadia said that he never proposed to carry the "ashes" of Saraswati and alleged that Archbishop Raphael Cheenath had "lied under oath to the apex court". The dead body of Swamiji was not cremated as his was a Samadhi, where a holy man is entombed on death. So the claims of the 'asthi-kalash yatra' (carrying of ashes), were not true."*[cccxxxi]

Another factor which compounds the conspiracy is the complicity of the Government. India's Supreme Court, in a surprise move, revealed a blatant bias towards the Christians. Ashok Sahu, former DG of Police for the State of Arunachal Pradesh questioned this action. "*Shri Ashok Sahu in a press release has expressed "shock and disbelief" as how the honorable Supreme Court entertained a writ petition by the Catholic Archbishop Raphael Cheenath from Bhubaneswar. Normally, the Supreme Court directs such petitioners to seek relief in the high court. Preferential treatment shown to the petitioner has diluted the authority of the honorable High Court in Orissa. Not only that, the Archbishop being one of the prime suspects in the conspiracy of the murder of Swamijee is getting indulgence at the behest of the apex court. Shri Sahu further alleged in the press statement that on one hand, Archbishop Vincent Concessao from Delhi comes to hold parley with Hindu leaders in Bhubaneswar for peace keeping in the State, and on the other, the Archbishop of Bhubaneswar is filing frivolous petitions in the Supreme Court in Delhi by-passing the High Court in Orissa. This double*

[cccxxx] **Deccan Chronicle** 'Maoists warn unfaithful cadre' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa August 31, 2008
[cccxxxi] **Times News Network** 'Political Fallout' October 25, 2008

standard exposes that the Church authorities are not genuinely interested in peace in the State."[CCCXXXII]

In one of the strangest incidents ever, in early March 2008, Congress leader and son of Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi went incognito into the Maoist infested areas of Orissa. The incognito trip was organized by a Delhi based NGO. "*Rahul Gandhi's visit to a tribal village that too in a Maoist-infested area, late on Friday evening raises a big question. A miffed state police force is trying to figure that out as they ferret out details of why the scion of the extremely vulnerable Gandhi family ducked out of the Koraput SP's security cordon and melted into the night, accompanied by a few personal SPG guards, in the Naxal-infested area. The Koraput police had a sleepless night when they found Rahul heading towards an undisclosed location at night. They tried to stop him, but Rahul was in no mood to return. District SP Deepak Kumar Chauhan spotted Rahul boarding a vehicle at the Nalco guest house in Damanjodi around 8 pm. His vehicle was sandwiched between two others, packed with SPG men. As Rahul was about to get into the vehicle, his secretary told Chauhan to keep quiet. Though flabbergasted by the response, the SP refused to give up and followed Rahul's vehicle. Enquiries revealed that the SPG tried to stop him at least thrice. "I told them security was my responsibility and as the district SP I have the right to know about his (Rahul's) program," Cauhan said. "I cited the 2004 attack on Koraput town by Maoists, but they refused to listen to me. Later, a senior SPG person got off the vehicle and engaged me in conversation. While we were talking, two vehicles left the place and melted into the darkness." Enquiries revealed that Rahul went incognito to Maoist-infested Kandhapungar village, about 30 km from the guest house. His secret trip was organized by an NGO for which a senior IAS officer from New Delhi reached Koraput via Vishakhapatnam some days back."*[CCCXXXIII]

Congress supporters have attempted to portray Rahul's visit as an example of his youth and naiveté. This only serves to highlight the gullibility and naivety of those who believe such a view. Whatever the case may be, only a conspiracy can explain it. The best explanation given is that Rahul Gandhi's visit was an attempt to reach out and understand the Maoist issue at the ground level. It is also just as plausible that as a Congress leader he was actively negotiating something detrimental to Orissa's non-Congress BJD-BJP alliance Government. This could explain Rahul Gandhi's refusal to

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[CCCXXXII] **Hindu Jagarana Press Release** '*Sahu warns on attempt to sabotage return of peace in odisha'*
September 4, 2008
[CCCXXXIII] **Times of India** '*Rahul Gandhi gives cops the slip in Naxal heartland'* March 9, 2008

permit State security officials from accompanying him to the State's most insecure region. If the visit had truly been about reaching out or curiosity what harm could there be in allowing the Orissa State security officers to accompany him? The requirement and demand for secrecy and non-disclosure raises great suspicions regarding this move by Rahul Gandhi. The entire incident smells of conspiracy.

Another clear case of conspiracy is found in the Christian Pana response to the attack on Swamiji. The attack upon Swami Lakshmananda near Darsingbadi village during the December 2007 Kandhamal riots had been verified by everyone across the political spectrum. Srimati Ajayanti Pradhan, Congress Party member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), from G. Udayagiri, Kandhamal publicly identified party workers of BJD as behind this incident. She particularly stated that "*the persons of Sugrib Pradhan, Member of Parliament (MP) from that area*" as the perpetrators of the attack. [cccxxxiv]

The medical records of Swami Lakshmananda and his associates verified their injuries. The statements of the related FIRs are consistent with the eyewitness accounts of the incident. There is no doubt that the attack took place. However when various fact finding missions visited the village of Darsingbadi to determine the circumstances and details of the attack, the Pana Christians completely denied that any attack had taken place. In complete contrast to the established facts, the evidence and the statements of Congress Party leaders and others, the Christian Panas of Darsingbadi village refused to admit knowing anything about the attack. In an obvious act of conspiracy, the Christian Pana community closed ranks and completely denied that the attack ever took place. Ignoring the complete disconnect from reality represented by their conspired silence, the Christian Panas of Darsingbadi village displayed the collective ability to consciously misrepresent the truth. Perhaps emboldened by a complicit National media, the minority groups and the Indian churches' repeated cover-ups of their crimes, the Christian Panas were confident that their lies would be accepted. This speaks to the credibility or rather the lack of credibility of the Christian Pana testimonials.

A majority of the accusations implicating the VHP, Bajrang Dal and RSS are based upon the testimonials of these very same people. Just as the Christian Panas collectively conspired to deny that any attack took place, despite the proof provided by Congress,

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[cccxxxiv] **Justice on Trial Kandhamal Fact Finding Mission** Kandhamal Root Cause, February 7, 2008

BJP, BJD, the medical and police reports, they collectively accused the entire incident as a plot by the RSS and VHP. There is absolutely no doubt that these accounts are prejudiced and unreliable yet the media and India's political and intellectual elite base all their conclusions regarding Kandhamal upon these very same unreliable sources. In a kind of ponzy scheme, the Christian Panas lie about the Hindus and then the media and Leftist elites trumpet these lies as proof that the Hindu groups are inhumane fascists. Pontificating upon the dangers of Hindu extremism, they speak from a faulty foundation. Never validating their basic premise that the Hindus are extremists, they lecture, write and propagandize their prejudiced views seeing themselves as the self appointed guardians of Secular Democracy.

Another claim has been made that the Pana Christians torched their own homes and churches. No direct evidence has appeared to verify this allegation. However there is some logic behind this theory. One report from Orissa regards a Christian convert who burnt down a church. His Pastor built the church on his land without permission. The convert used the recent riots as an opportunity to get rid of the church and reclaim his land. Another point to consider is that the State Government compensates all riot victims for loss of life and property. If a grass hut is burnt down or a ramshackle tin hut that served as a church, the government offers thousands of rupees in compensation. The value of the compensation far outweighs the original value of the burnt structure. Thus some have surely used this opportunity to their financial benefit.

To top it off Christian leaders like John Dayal have been traveling the world collecting massive donations allegedly in order to help in the reconstruction efforts. Being the very same structures which the State Government has already committed thousands of dollars towards, this is practically free money. The unfortunate truth is that corruption is endemic to India. It is quite probable that the Kandhamal riots were a financial windfall for some sections of the community. The unquestionably real and blatantly manipulative activities of the Christian Panas, in nearly every other aspect of the Kandhamal situation, make it quite plausible that the Christian Panas did indeed burn their own buildings. An in-depth investigation into this matter should be undertaken.

Though I did not discover any evidence regarding the Christian Panas burning their own homes and churches, there is proof that they were involved in attacks upon their own people. *'Raikia Relief Camp: Christians Arrested'. "At 7 pm October 2nd four Christian men were arrested by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officers. The men were spotted*

near the Raikia Relief camp. They were apprehended as they were attempting to throw bombs at the Christian relief camp. Among the 4 arrested, one has been identified as Juan Nayak and the others' names are not yet known. The Police also discovered bombs on their persons."[cccxxxv]

During my interviews with journalists from the English language press such as Times of India, Asian age, New Indian Express, Pioneer News, Statesman etc I asked if any of them had heard about this incident. They replied in the affirmative. I asked as to why their publications had refused to publish the news regarding Pana Christians attack upon their own people. Sanjaya Jena, head of the Hindustan Samachar News Agency replied, *"We were directly instructed by the police not to publish this news."* Rajaram Satapathy of Times of India stated that, *"The Police did not want it published because they were afraid that the news would start yet another round of violence That being said, there is no doubt that the Press is absolutely biased and favors the Christians and is loathe to publish anything that makes them look bad ."*

Not publishing the truth in this regard has little to do with maintaining the peace and everything to do with conspiracy. If the media had equally suppressed news of Kandha Hindu attacks upon Pana Christians perhaps it could be claimed as an attempt to maintain peace. If the media had such a policy across the board maybe there would be a point to the suppression of the news. But with the constant magnification of every act by a Hindu and the suppression of every act by a Christian the fires of resentment, anger and frustration are stoked and enflamed.

The Pana Christians have been quite blatant in taking advantage of any opportunity to empower themselves at the expense of the Kandha people. Recognizing that the media hungered for any and all reports that discredit the Hindus, the Christian Panas crossed the line of legality and justice. It was discovered that the Pana Christians had obtained copies of the voters' lists and were maliciously filing police complaints against the Kandha Hindus listed therein. This was discovered when the police followed up on the complaints and attempted to arrest people that had long been dead. The Orissa news portal Odisha Today explains, *"Members of the Christian community currently residing in the Government relief camps are busy writing FIRs accusing tribals of involvement in the riots. Using local voters' lists the Christians are naming all the villagers in their FIR (first incident report) and putting pressure on the Police to arrest all those named in the FIRs. Even people who*

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cccxxxv **Dharitri News** 'Raikia Relief Camp: Christians Arrested' October 3, 2008

have died long since are being named in the FIRs and accused of violent participation in the riots. Meanwhile the tribals have fled deep into the forests in fear of false arrest."[CCCXXXVI]

Regarding the issue of deceased people on the voters' list a news item dated August 25 2008 declared, *"Dead too in voters' list…large numbers of errors have crept into the voters' list. The names of at least 700 dead persons have found a place in the list, while the names of several genuine voters have been deleted. There are also the names of some bogus voters in the list…In the months of April and May there was a door to door campaign by teachers to rectify the voters' list. However the corrections could not be carried out in the computer system."* [CCCXXXVII]

One can only wonder if these 700 dead voters would have 'voted' in the next elections. This raises some serious questions. Since India's entire electioneering process is computerized, how can confidence be placed in a system that fails to correct itself despite the proper efforts made in that direction? There is too much at stake to allow such a lapse. This example of dead voters in Kalahandi district represents a systemic problem that is obviously rampant in neighboring Kandhamal as well.

Meanwhile Pana Christians were arrested for threatening to kill the Kandha leader Lambodhar Kanhar and the Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. *"The prime accused Chitrasen Nayak called Kanhar on September 20th and threatened to kill him and the Chief Minister. He warned them of dire consequences to come their way. An FIR was lodged with the Khajurpada Police. 2 others Prasant Nayak and Hula were also arrested as accomplices."*[CCCXXXVIII]

Despite this news appearing in the media, no great discussion arose regarding the aggression of the Christians. No doubt if any Hindus had been implicated in such a scheme, the news would become the fodder for ongoing debates on the dangers to the Nation represented by such Hindu extremists. In this case we see a clear indication of the Kandhamal Christian Panas violent mentality and anti-social behavior. Instead of identifying such behavior as an inexcusable assault upon the social fabric of the State, the media focuses upon blaming 'Hindu extremists' however these accusations of violence come with a high dose of rhetoric and scant proof. In this way an entire group of people are labeled as culprits while the true and identifiable perpetrators of very real

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CCCXXXVI **Odisha Today** October 19, 2008
CCCXXXVII **New Indian Express** 'Dead too in Voters' list' Bhuvaneshwar,Orissa August 25, 2008
CCCXXXVIII **Ibid.** October 5, 2008

crimes are ignored and allowed the dignity of being recognized innocent until proven guilty.

The image of virulent Hindu fanatics rampaging throughout the Nation has been artificially foisted upon the consciousness of the public. Based more on prejudice than upon the facts, this image is sustained by a blatant manipulation of the facts. As the media gave up its role as a news source and continues as the voice of the Leftist-Congress-Globalist alliance, distortions have become the norm. Hindu activism is painted in the darkest colors as India's legions of authentically violent players are portrayed in a sympathetic manner.

Recently a Bangladeshi author, Taslima Nasreen was repeatedly threatened with death and fled her country for the shelter of India. However, she was forced to flee the allegedly secular Nation of India after a campaign of vicious and violent protests and fatwas by uncompromising Muslim extremists. Abandoning their commitment to women's rights and freedom of speech, India's elitist and self appointed guardians of secularism failed to protect her human rights. Rather than confronting such an obvious assault upon human rights, India's Leftists and Congress leadership focused upon their true prejudices against India's Hindus. Attempting to portray every Hindu demand as an assault upon India's secular ideals, accusations are bandied about and accepted as fact without any attempt at verification. The fact is Hindu activist do not rely on mass violence to make their point. It is not necessary. Their numbers are vast and this is their strength. The recent Amarnath controversy is a clear example of successful Hindu activism. Once the Hindus unite and stand up for themselves, there is none to resist them. This is their power.

A recent incident that took place in Kanyakumari, at the very southern tip of India, is illuminating. A 24-foot deity of the monkey god Hanuman was forcibly removed by government order. Hindus protested and resisted the removal, yet it was done within the framework of law.

"A 24-foot Hanuman statue, installed at the Sunset Point in Kanyakumari was removed on Monday by those who installed it following protest from the district administration that it was installed without permission. On Sunday the State BJP, Hindu Munnani and the Shiv Sena had formed a human chain around the massive statue, protesting against its removal from a spot which is dominated by Christian fishermen. The granite monolith, made in Mamallapuram

(Mahabalipuram), was installed by the Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Nama Biksha Kendram, which claimed to have got the permission from the Kovalam Panchayat. The Kovalam Panchayat President M. Belicettal claimed the organization tricked him by claiming that they wanted to set up a Hanuman park. However, the DC (District Collector) Jyothi Nirmala had said that it was not enough to seek permission of the panchayat and that the organization should have the permission of the district administration. She directed the statue to be removed. On Monday, the organization, on its own, following the directive, removed the statue."[cccxxxix]

The issue was dealt with a responsible manner as the Hindus themselves removed the statue in accordance with the law. In the entire history of modern India, not once have India's Muslims or Christians taken it upon themselves to remove a cross or mosque in the cause of communal harmony. Despite the protests of their own activists who had formed a human chain to block the removal of Hanuman, the Hindu leadership put aside their personal aspirations and removed the massive Hanuman structure at their own expense. This is not merely a rare occasion of Hindu responsibility; rather it is an example of the Hindu leadership's normal operating procedures and commitment to law and order and communal harmony.

In contrast the Pana Christians of Kandhamal, in particular, follow a path of aggressive 'in your face' Christian triumphalism. This is obvious by the massive and unnatural growth of churches in the district. Archbishop Cheenath of Orissa boasted that there are over 1 million churches in the State. The aggressive mentality is clear.

As India and the world were riveted upon the 26/11 Mumbai massacre, members of a little known terror group were sentenced to death. The Anjuman group had been bombing Christian churches across southern India in an attempt to rouse tensions between Hindus and Christians. Their first and primary goal was to discredit the BJP as the perpetrators of the bombings and alienate the average Indian voter from supporting the BJP. The scheme fell apart when the plotters' van exploded, killing 2 terrorists and wounding one. Hate literature was found in the van as well. Funded by Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI, the group believed that once India was in a state of chaos, a Muslim leader from Afghanistan would invade and return India to the Islamic fold.

[cccxxxix] **Pioneer News Service** '*Amid protests, statue of Hanuman removed from Kanyakumari*' Chennai, Tamil Nadu September 30, 2008

"To forensic experts it is a primary lesson: dead men tell tales. On July 9, they stumbled on to an extraordinary one when a blue Maruti Omni exploded -- killing two of its occupants and injuring a third -- off J.C. Road in Bangalore, 45 minutes before a bomb blast at the city's St Peter and Paul Church. The Goa number plate apart, inflammatory pamphlets picked up from the van helped unravel the origin of a series of explosions -- 12 in all -- that had rocked churches, a temple and a mosque across the peninsula from Andhra Pradesh through Karnataka to Goa since May 21, 2000. While S.M. Ibrahim, the survivor of the van blast, furnished details as he battled for life in hospital, the police carried out a swift raid on his house at Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh and another at Varthur village near Bangalore. It was enough for them to implicate the small-time road and building contractor along with followers of a bizarre sect, the Hyderabad-based Siddique Deendar Anjuman, in the explosions. They are believed to be part of a systematic campaign, to incite hatred and violence among different religious groups. "They were out to create a communal divide," says Karnataka state Director General of Police C. Dinakar… Following the spate of arrests, however, it is clear that the followers of the sect -- *who would at best number 15,000 -- are now part of a larger game of waging jihad against the Hindus and Christians in India. It is learnt that Hassan's long-term goal is to make India an Islamic state… According to the arrested, members of the sect have been distributing booklets and inciting strong anti-Hindu and anti-Christian feelings in the South… It is believed that the Anjuman targeted the Catholic Church in Goa only to draw international attention. By choosing a tourist destination, its activists pointed to their ability to strike at will."*[CCCXL]

With the identical agenda of bringing the BJP into disrepute, the Anjuman terror group intended to destabilize India by aggravating communal tensions.

"According to the police, Hassan, a son of Siddiqui, now operates from Peshawar. The intelligence dossier on Hassan, currently the Anjuman's spiritual head, says his plan is to create communal hatred in India. The apparent logic is to discredit the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance government. The Anjuman claims the BJP, a Hindu-leaning party, has no right to govern India, which it says will be made a Muslim country. Police officials probing Anjuman activities say Hassan masterminded the blasts with the ISI's backing. "It was a different kind of strategy from the ISI," says B N Nagaraj, joint commissioner of police, Bangalore. Nagaraj said the aim was to create confusion and commotion. "That is why they even planted gelatin sticks outside a mosque in Guntur," he told rediff.com"[CCCXLI]

[CCCXL] **India Today** 'Explosive Expose' Hubli, Karnataka July 31, 2000
[CCCXLI] **Rediff** 'Invading India and spreading Islam is Anjuman's mission' August 16, 2000

As Churches were burnt and attacked across Kandhamal and India, no investigative reporter or allegedly concerned citizen evoked the potentiality of another Anjuman-like scenario. As the Anjuman conspiracy lay exposed and its perpetrators convicted, the news was obscured by the dramatic Mumbai events.

Such manipulative conspiracies are nothing new. Smithsonian magazine, America's foremost magazine on history, culture and science, recently highlighted the British-American schemes against Iran's post WW II democracy. This same exact pattern is obvious in the Indian context.

"After trying every conceivable way to pressure (Iranian PM) Mossadegh to abandon his nationalization plan, Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered British agents to organize a coup and overthrow him. When Mossadegh learned of the plot, he closed the British Embassy in Tehran and expelled British diplomats, including the agents who were plotting his overthrow. In desperation, Churchill asked US president Harry S. Truman to order the newly formed Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to depose Mossadegh. Truman refused…After President Dwight D. Eisenhower took office in 1953, however US policy changed…In August 1953, the CIA sent one of its most intrepid agents, Kermit Roosevelt Jr., the grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt, to Tehran with orders to overthrow Mossadegh. Employing tactics that ranged from bribing newspaper editors to organizing riots, Roosevelt immediately set to work. From a command center in the basement of the US Embassy, he managed to create the impression that Iran was collapsing into chaos. On the night of August 19, an angry crowd, led by Roosevelt's Iranian agents-and supported by police and military units whose leaders he had suborned-converged on Mossadegh's home. After a two-hour siege, Mossadegh fled over a back wall. His house was looted and set afire. The handful of American agents who organized the coup were, as Roosevelt later wrote, 'full of jubilation, celebration and occasional and totally unpredictable whacks on the back as one or the other was suddenly overcome with enthusiasm.' Mossadegh was arrested, tried for high treason, imprisoned for three years, then sentenced to house arrest for life. He died in 1967. The 1953 coup put an end to democratic rule in Iran. After Mossadegh was deposed, the CIA arranged to bring Mohammed Reza Shah back from Rome, where he had fled during the pre-coup turmoil, and returned him to the Peacock Throne."[CCCXLII]

The entire Kandhamal scenario suggests similar intrusion by foreign intelligence operatives. Whether it be the bribed news media or compromised police and

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CCCXLII **Smithsonian** 'Inside Iran's Fury' October 2008

government officials, the house burnings or the utterly biased and one-sided testimonials involved, the crisis in Kandhamal has been intentionally exacerbated.

As violence enveloped Kandhamal and the media presented its biased spin on events to the world, various groups descended upon the region. One such group entitled itself as '*Concerned Citizens*.' They went there in their own words '*on a fact finding mission*.' After returning to Delhi they issued an official 'Concerned Citizens Independent Fact-Finding Mission'. Despite the '*on the ground fact finding'* basis of their report, they failed to present any original observations in regard to the underlying causes of the tensions troubling Kandhamal. Despite having visited the region, interacted with Christian Panas, Kandhas, Police, Government officials and others, the Concerned Citizens Independent Fact-Finding Mission report relied upon the written testimony of a California, US based Professor. In an almost exact duplication, the University of California based Professor's work was plagiarized by the group. It is a striking example of the conspiracy involved by those committed to the promotion of a prefabricated campaign of calumny.

Concerned Citizens Independent Fact-Finding Mission report writes:

*"**Underlying Tensions**: In Hinduising Adivasis and polarizing relations between them and Dalits in the area, the Sangh Parivar has engineered a rivalry between Kandha Adivasis and Pana Dalit Christians in Kandhamal, instigating against the latter's campaign for scheduled tribe status. Dalit Christians under the law forfeit their right to affirmative action. In current law, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution (scheduled castes) order, 1950 held caste and religion to be mutually exclusive; 'no person who professes a religion different from the Hindu (later amended to include the Sikh or the Buddhist) religion shall be deemed to be a member of the Scheduled Caste' (Ministry of Law and Justice, 2006.)*

In other words, Dalits who convert to Christianity are divested of scheduled caste status and affirmative action afforded by the state via the 'reservation' system. This Christian leaders contend, impacts the ability of Dalit Christians to secure resources routinely controlled by those from upper caste backgrounds. Dalit converts to Hinduism are not denied such rights."

University of California Professor Ananga Chatterji writes:

"In Hinduising Adivasis and polarizing relations between them and Dalits in the area, the Sangh Parivar has reportedly engineered rivalries between Kondh Adivasis and Pana Dalit

Christians in Kandhamal, instigating against the latter's campaign for scheduled tribe status. Dalit Christians, under current law, forfeit their right to affirmative action. In current law, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 held caste and religion to be mutually exclusive: 'no person who professes a religion different from the Hindu [later amended to include the Sikh or the Buddhist] religion shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste'.

Dalits who convert to Christianity or Islam, Jainism and Zoroastrianism, and other faiths, are divested of scheduled caste status and affirmative action afforded by the state via the 'reservation' system…. This, Christian leaders contend, impacts the ability of Dalit Christians to secure resources routinely controlled by those from upper caste backgrounds. Dalit converts to Hinduism are not denied such rights." (Professor Chatterjee is apparently unaware that Zoroastrians do not accept new converts to their faith. Only through birth can one become a Zoroastrian.)

The plagiarism and collusion is obvious and undeniable. This '*fact finding*' mission had no ability to independently ascertain the underlying causes of tension at the root of Kandhamal's predicament. Rather than being '*independent*' as claimed, the group was obviously dependent upon the distant perspectives of a far removed US based academic. This raises a very pertinent query. If such a fundamental aspect of a report relies on the inaccurate views of a US based academic, rather than their own observations, how can we be confident of any of their conclusions? It is obvious that the Concerned Citizens group went to Kandhamal with preconceived notions. Both the California Professor and the members of the Concerned Citizens Independent Fact-Finding Mission appear to be creatures of powerful forces dedicated to the dismemberment of the Indian Nation. It is clear that they were following a pre-designed script and were merely acting out their prearranged roles clearly requested of them. The entire conspiracy behind this fact finding mission seems quite obvious. It was an exercise in propaganda and it was yet another attempt to add a cloak of authenticity to a pre-fabricated mythology.

We get some insight into the manipulative conspiracies of the leftist partisans in a revealing expose on the tampering and bribery connected to the 2002 Gujarat riots.

"A controversial Gujarat-based NGO was instrumental in organizing payment of Rs 1 lakh each to as many as ten witnesses in various post-Godhra riot cases. The money came from the

Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) relief fund and was distributed months before the witnesses deposed in the courts, five years after the clashes took place. Four other eyewitnesses received Rs 50,000 each. The revelation comes in the backdrop of reports that a host of Gujarat riot case victims were misled into signing affidavits giving false information at the behest of Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP), an NGO headed by social activist Teesta Setalvad. Incidentally, those who were both victims and eyewitnesses received Rs 1 lakh and Rs 50,000 while the victims got mere Rs 5,000 each. This has raised eyebrows over the selection of beneficiaries and the purpose of paying a disproportionately large sum to the eyewitnesses before the trial... Yasmin Banu Ismailbhai Shaikh (aunt of Zahira) of Baroda, who received Rs 50,000 (DD No 567552 dated August 1, 2007). Yasmin is a complainant in case No. 114/04 at Baroda. It is interesting to note that, when no substance was found in her complaint, she was directed to face lie detection test by the court and ever since she has not appeared in the court."[CCCXLIII]

India, seemingly, lacks the political will to reign in these corrupt purveyors of deception. Again we find an extraordinary phenomenon at work. Despite this clear case of fraud and witness tampering, such criminality is ignored. No hue and cry has arisen despite such obvious and blatant manipulations of the judicial process. Once again the established criminality of Teesta Setalvaad and Brinda Karat are discounted as the unsubstantiated allegations against the Bajrang Dal, BJP, VHP and RSS are advanced incessantly.

Violence for Votes or Votes for Violence

"Political Fallout: The ruling government of Orissa, headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, was a coalition of the BJP and the Biju Janata Dal (BJD). In the 147-member state assembly the BJD-BJP combine has 93 members, 32 of whom are from the BJP. Some BJP legislators blamed the government for not providing adequate protection to Saraswati, despite other attempts on his life. They called for withdrawing support from the government, which would lead to its collapse." Times of India [CCCXLIV]

No matter who you speak to regarding Kandhamal, all are in agreement about one thing; Politics. Not that they all agree politically, rather they all agree that Kandhamal's problems are political. The most oft-cited theory, regurgitated daily by India's media and Leftists elite, is that communal or ethnic tension is the fuel that runs the engine of

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CCCXLIII **Pioneer News Service** *'Godhra riot witnesses got Rs 1 lakh each'* December 20, 2008
CCCXLIV **Times of India** *'Political Fallout'* September 5, 2008

the BJP political machine. The '*Saffron Experiment'* in a '*laboratory of hate'*, '*Gujarat style Moditva'* and other such think tank originated and media disseminated labels, pour out of the mouths of India's self-styled secular guardians. Using Kandhamal as a caste study, one can perform an experiment in investigative research. The first thing one will discover about Kandhamal politics is that it is a non-BJP zone. Orissa's BJD-BJP coalition Government has certain understandings and agreements. One of these agreements is that the BJP will not field candidates in Kandhamal. So for all intents and purposes there are only two political parties in Kandhamal; the BJD and the Congress Party. Therefore vote bank consolidation within Kandhamal can only be accomplished by the BJD or the Congress Party.

It has been argued that despite the lack of a BJP presence in Kandhamal, the BJP still benefits from the Kandhmal violence in other parts of India. This argument depends upon the theory known as the '*Saffron Experiment'* formula. This formula, like any other, should depend upon certain scientific principles. However upon closer investigation the '*Saffron Experiment'* formula does not hold up. As the largest political party in India, the BJP has a massive support base across the entire country. This massive support base has left the political enemies of the BJP and of India in a state of panic. Grasping at straws attempting to discredit and denigrate the popular and democratic foundations of the BJP, its political opponents have developed fantastic theories based upon nothing more than word jugglery.

Let us investigate the actual mechanics of the so-called "*Saffron Experiment*" from within the Kandhamal context.

1. The BJP stirs up animosity between Hindus and Christians in Kandhamal
2. The BJP capitalizes on the religious sentiments of Hindu voters elsewhere in the country
3. The BJP cashes in on the votes of the '*under siege mentality'* Hindus and wins the election

The formula is enticingly simple yet it is fatally flawed. First of all it is merely a theory that has never been proven for the simple reason that it is not based upon reality. The foundation of this formula is based upon the assumption that the BJP campaigns on a platform of violence and that a majority of Hindus are prone to violence. Allegedly the BJP ties the image of the '*under siege'* Hindus of Kandhamal

to the psyches of Hindus beyond Kandhamal. Then after presenting themselves as the sole champions of the '*oppressed majority'*, the Hindu voters fall in line and vote BJP.

According to the critics of the BJP, this is the foundation of the BJP support base. There are many assumptions and fatal flaws in this political theory. It can only be maintained by ignorance and an elitist form of condescension. One assumption is that the Hindu voters are unintelligent and cannot and do not think for themselves. Another assumption is that the Hindu voters are out of touch with reality.

A major and fatal flaw in the '*Saffron Experiment'* theory is that it relies upon the conclusion that Hindus in general are bloodthirsty, merciless and inhumane. Another fatal flaw is that this theory completely ignores the image making power and omnipresence of the media. It is the media and not the BJP that makes the case to the public regarding events in Kandhamal. The BJP, like any other political party is capable of speaking to its supporters in an effective manner. However, the vast masses of politically inactive independent voters have not the time or interest in accessing specialized information accessible only through direct participation in Party politics. They depend upon the news media for their perspectives regarding events in Kandhamal and the alleged role of the BJP. Therefore for the alleged BJP '*communal experiment'* theory to succeed two different key ingredients are required:

1. An acceptance that the average Hindu voter is belligerent and condoning of brutality and injustice
2. An omnipresent voice that amplifies the BJP perspective and creates the image required to harness the support of the voting Hindu masses.

Otherwise it is impossible for this model to function. If the BJP cannot project itself beyond its own support network, the efforts involved in aggravating communal tensions are futile. Its own people are already committed to supporting the BJP. Thus any attempts to convince their own supporters are redundant. The BJP echo chamber that is a common feature of all Hindu organizations rarely if ever impacts the perceptions of the non-politicized masses. These millions of voters rely upon the mainstream media for their understanding of current events. Their views are thus based on prepackaged sound-bites and the biased agendas of the image makers behind the global media corporations. This media is blatantly and rabidly anti-BJP.

According to this extreme view, the BJP represents Hindu fascism, Muslim genociders, nun rapists, Church and Mosque demolishers, Christian burning, Gandhi killers, Swami killers and Hindu temple attackers. A clear example of such deliberate and reprehensible media manipulation was on display when on August 30, 2008 the Times of India promoted the theory that Swamiji had been murdered by the Hindus. The Times of India was not alone in suggesting that the BJP or its allies murdered Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati in order to stir up the Hindus.

Since the BJP's supporters are not the target of a '*Vote BJP'* campaign and the violence is alleged to be a part of that campaign, the question arises as to whom such a violent campaign would appeal to. Such a group is automatically assumed to be a ruthless lot. This is clearly the judgment being made. When we look at the formula in question, we discover that rather than being an asset to the BJP, the violence and mayhem are a great stumbling block and obstacle to their continued success. In fact the only ones to gain from the political violence are those political parties which flock to the sites of conflict, vulture-like, in anticipation of augmenting their potential support base.

This pattern repeats itself time and time again. As if issuing an ultimatum to Orissa's government, Communist leader Brinda Karat threatened more violence unless it snapped ties with the BJP, , *"Senior CPI-M leader Brinda Karat today asked Orissa Chief Minister and BJD chief Naveen Patnaik to snap ties with BJP and oust it from government in order to put an end to communal violence in Kandhamal. "I have told Naveen Patnaik that BJP should be kept out of the government. Communal riots will continue as long as BJP remains in power," CPI-M politburo member told reporters after meeting the chief minister here. Accusing saffron activists of outfits like RSS and VHP of indulging in attacks and violence in a planned manner, Karat said communal colour was being given to the killing of VHP leader Lakshmananda Saraswati though it was suspected to be the handiwork of Maoists. Stating that the people of the state were losing faith in the state government and the entire country was worried because of violence in Orissa, she said the ruling BJD must keep itself away from BJP."*[CCCXLV]

Brinda Karat, recently implicated in the bribery of court witnesses, saw potential benefit in the ongoing violence. Perhaps the same funds used to demonize the BJP in

[CCCXLV] **Indopia** '*Snap ties with BJP, Brinda tells BJD'* Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa August 29, 2008

Gujarat found takers in Kandhamal. It behooves the Indian authorities to begin an in-depth investigation into the fiscal, judicial and political interference and manipulations of the CPI-M, Teesta Setalvaad and others abusing the political process.

By constantly raising the bogey of trident wielding, saffron head-banded maniacs at the center of power, Congress, Communists and other 'secular' groups are able to maintain a dedicated voting bloc under their control. By highlighting the alleged dangers, they invest themselves with the identity of the protectors. If there are any political groups that are verifiably capitalizing on the violence and communal tensions, it is the Congress and Communists Parties.

The '*violence for votes and votes for violence'* actually represents an effective and functional model. Let us analyze this formula represented by this concept. Violence is stimulated or sensationalized by a complicit media. The Congress and others capitalize on the events by publicly challenging the administration and authorities when in the role of the political opposition. Having power at the center they constantly threaten to invoke President's rule. They give a media amplified voice to the resentments and anguish of a disrupted society and thus harness the '*voice of reason'* image. Since a majority of people are reasonable, the average voter feels that '*at least someone in the system feels like I do'* the anti-BJP political establishment attempts to identify themselves with them. Every '*noble*' call for a return to sanity and humanity and peace are broadcast repeatedly and constantly on TV, Radio, Internet and Print media. Every non-Hindu rally and march is showcased as a gentle and reassuring call for communal harmony, peace, love and understanding.

In contrast every Hindu rally is twisted into a hostile, communal threatening showcase of chauvinistic Hindu Triumphalism. Their calls for justice are labeled as demands based on an alleged Hindu extremist outlook. Whereas the demands of Congress etc are presented as fair-minded calls for Justice and Unity devoid of any ethnic or communal color. Unlike the BJP, the Congress Party specifically and Communist groups have a supportive base in the mainstream media. It parrots the anti-BJP message of such partisans word for word. The theories of the anti-BJP groups have become the talking points of the talking heads of the Indian media. The voting masses digest these views then claim them as their own, fulfilling the process of '*manufactured consent'*. Through this formula, the Congress Party and others have

developed a committed anti-BJP voting bloc. This formula has been spectacularly successful within the Muslim and Christian populations.

The Kandhamal violence makes an interesting case study of the socio-political dynamics active throughout India. It is very easy to chart the impact and political fallout and the ebb and flow of public opinion in regards to the impact of the Kandhmal crisis. Within less than 24 hours of the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda. The Congress led Opposition demanded the resignation of Chief Minister Patnaik and stated his BJD-BJP alliance should quit immediately due to its "*inability to maintain law and order*". The leader of the VHP accused the Orissa Government of acting like a '*eunuch*' and demanded an official apology from the Chief Minister for the killings. BJP members of the Government considered breaking the 10 year alliance with the BJD. BJP Party member and Minister of Higher Education stated, *"We will not allow the house to function till the culprits have been arrested. Thalcher BJP MLA Mahesh Sahu expressed displeasure with the functioning of the Government, "Administration failed to protect Swami Lakshmananda. Sources with the BJP Party…were insisting on snapping ties with the BJD." 'Cracks appear in Ruling Alliance' BJP hawks, VHP leaders insist on breaking ties with the BJD."* [CCCXLVI]

"Congress moves no Trust Motion". On Sunday Congress Party leaders met with the Governor and sought his intervention to maintain law and order in the State…Saturday night's incident of attack on Swami Lakshmananda and his murder along with four of others at the Jaleshpata Ashram evidently has provided the much needed ammunition to the Opposition led by J.B. Patnaik."[CCCXLVII]

VHP leader Tagodia directly questioned the role of the BJP, *"It is a collective responsibility and the BJP is in the Government…the people and the Hindu Samaj are already questioning the role of the BJP and the Party has to answer."*[CCCXLVIII]

A former General Secretary of the BJP K.N. Govindacharya blasted his former party. *"To achieve power, the pseudo-Nationalist party, the BJP, is acting like cheerleaders to the BJD. They have no stand of their own. In doing so, the BJP has become subservient and a mere surrogate…its support of the BJD proves this. Everyone from the Chief Minister and*

[CCCXLVI] **Times of India** August 26, 2008
[CCCXLVII] **Ibid**.
[CCCXLVIII] **Statesman News Service** August 26, 2008

Prime Minister condemned the attacks on the Minority community but no one has regretted that an 84 year old Sadhu had no security and was murdered."[CCCXLIX]

In a dramatic development highlighting potential disaster for the BJP, the Shankaracharya of Puri Nischalananda Saraswati called upon the RSS to sever all ties with the BJP for ignoring Hindus and for their inability to stop conversion, end cow slaughter and for failing to protect Swami Lakshmananda.

Times of India, *"On Thursday Shankaracharya of Puri asked the RSS to throw the BJP out of the Sangh Parivar. The Seer also accused the BJP of sidelining Hindus, the largest religious community in the country."* To put this in context, the Shankaracharya is similar to the Pope and is the most prominent religious leader in the State of Orissa. Such a public declaration against the BJP had the potential of severely hampering their election prospects. Earlier, the Congress Party blamed the violence in Kandhamal on a rift between the BJP-BJD. *"According to political watchers, the BJP-BJD have been at loggerheads in the Kandhamal district as the former favor the Christian Panas while the latter identifies itself with the Kandha tribals…There has been an ethnic conflict between the Panas and the Kandhas for several decades and as of late it has been accentuated in the wake of the Kui language speaking Christian Panas seeking tribal status. 'It is a rift between the BJD and BJP,' Said Congress spokesperson Prasad Harichandan."*[CCCL]

Calls for the resignation of the Chief Minister were sounded by Hindu organizations such as the Hindu Jagaran Samukhya (HJS), *"HJS, an RSS outfit today asked CM Patnaik to step down for his Governments' failure to arrest the killers of Swami Lakshmananda and four others even after 36 days of the incident. The Chief Minister is singularly responsible for the present disturbing situation in Kandhamal and he has no moral right to stay in office as his Government has failed to arrest the killers of the Seer even after 36 days of the incident, Samukhya President Ashok Sahu told media persons here."*[CCCLI]

In a sign of major disenchantment with the BJP amongst Hindus, the VHP continued to question the BJP's commitment to Hindus. According to media reports efforts were made to harmonize the situation. The BJP's popularity amongst the voting masses was at the lowest it has been in years. Statesman News Service revealed, *"It is also reliably learnt that the RSS leader Mr. Ram Madhav had spoken to the VHP leader*

CCCXLIX **Times of India** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 9, 2008
CCCL **Times of India** Bhuvaneshwar, January 17, 2008
CCCLI **Express News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 29, 2008

Mr. Togadia today to try and restrain him from going full blast against the BJP since it was part of the ruling coalition in the State."[CCCLII]

Ashok Singhal, leader of the VHP warned the BJP-BJD Government, *"We stand for Hindutva and the Hindu Samaj; any political party which does the same reaps electoral benefit from our stand. The CM should remember that there over 3.5 million Hindus in the State of Orissa."*[CCCLIII]

The media argued the same case in regards to the lack luster approach to the situation. On the Editorial page of the Statesman News Service the disastrous political impact of the Kandhamal event upon the predicament of the BJP is noted.[CCCLIV]

This frustration ran deep and was rampant amongst the Hindu activist community. In the days immediately following the killings, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati's successor, Shankar Chaitanya voiced his disappointment, *"Not a single Minister visited us after the killings, not even our own BJP. The District Collector comes; sometimes he gave us rice, beans and sugar for the children."*

Jagadamba Mall of the Tribal organization VKA (Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram), wrote in the Nagaland Post, *"There cannot be a greater embarrassment for the ruling alliance. The BJP cannot escape the moral responsibility of being a party to these omissions and commissions on the part of the coalition Government."*[CCCLV]

Delineating the political fallout and current plight of Orissa's BJD and BJP parties, Subhas Chandra Pattanayak, of the news journal *'Orissa Matters'* commented upon the results of Orissa's September 2008 Municipal elections, *"The result of municipality elections in Orissa has gone clearly against the Congress. It does not necessarily suggest that the urban peoples have expressed their faith in Chief Minister Navin Patnaik by electing BJD-BJP candidates in majority of urban wards. There was no coalition between the BJD and the BJP in the urban sector. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik knew and he knows that his political credibility has dwindled in Orissa. Even his partner in power, BJP knows it. Therefore the BJP had not preferred an official coalition with Navin in the Municipal*

CCCLII **Statesman News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa August 27, 2008
CCCLIII **Statesman News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 13, 2008
CCCLIV **Ibid.** August 26, 2008
CCCLV **Nagaland Post** Kohima, Nagaland September 13, 2008

elections. And, this is the reality. So why did the candidates belonging to BJD and to BJP get votes in majority of wards? The answer is very simple. The people of Orissa, specifically the town-dwellers, who usually are news-watchers, are well aware of how the Congress party has become a launching pad of USA interests in India and how American lobbyists have become the so-called high-command syndicate of this party. It would have been very unpatriotic for town-dwellers of Orissa to vote for Congress that has subjected India to American hegemony by all nefarious means. Therefore, they were to defeat the Congress and therefore, candidates belonging to BJD & BJP have been considered as lesser evils."[CCCLVI]

Another clear example of the anti-BJP backlash can be seen in the Kandha response to a BJP minister's visit. Orissa's BJP Revenue Minister made a visit to Tikabali, Kandhamal during the early phase of the violence. He was forced to flee under police protection as he became a target of angry and frustrated Kandhas.

"A fresh violence has occurred in a relief camp in Tikabali on the very day of visit of the revenue minister Manmohan Samal who belongs to BJP. As the events went, Tribal people and the other Hindu members met the revenue minister in the relief centre itself and demanded relief for themselves on the plea that they are poor people living in a miserable condition because of the imposition of curfew and 144 as they are unable to go to work in such a situation. Somehow, the revenue minister could escape the place being escorted by police. Soon after, over 500 women armed with lathi marched towards the relief centre. Apprehending that there would be an attack on the relief centre, police soon started lathi-charge wherein over 50 persons were injured including 10 shifted to Phulbani District Head Quarter Hospital and the nearest Medical College in Berhampur in a serious condition. Now, tribal right, women right and human right activists are raising the issue of violation of right in this incident as male police and paramilitary forces have beaten up the tribal and Hindu women."[CCCLVII]

As for Christian voters, frustration and angst against the Government was rampant. Support for the BJP was non-existent, being perceived as '*the Hindu party'* by a majority of Christians. A statement from the Union of Catholic Asian News typifies their stance. *"The Pro-Hindu BJP or Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party) is part*

[CCCLVI] **Orissa Matters** '*Even the City Citizens of Orissa rejected the Party of American Lobbyists*' September 20, 2008
[CCCLVII] **Xing.com** Basudev Mahapatra September 1, 2008

of Orissa's 2 Party Coalition Government. It is considered the political arm of groups that want to make India a Hindu theocratic Nation."

Despite the BJD's alliance with the BJP, there has long been support amongst the Christians for Orissa's regional party the Biju Janata Dal or BJD. This was especially true of the Kandhamal District. It was within this context that the Kandhamal Congress representatives implicated the BJD Ministers in the attack upon Swami Lakshmananda. "Interestingly, the Opposition Congress had earlier alleged that a BJD worker perceived to be close to Phulbani MP Sugrib Singh owned the bus that blocked the octogenarian 'Saffron' leader Swami Lakshmananda's jeep on Christmas Eve. The bus was earlier owned by Sugrib Singh. He had transferred the ownership to the husband of one Kanti Sahu a local BJD leader. Sahu's husband Manoj is also a business partner of Singh's brother," said State Congress President Jayadeva Jena.

Once again we see events that shake the confidence of the Christians in the BJD Party. Its opponents seized upon these same events to capitalize on the opportunity for political gain. The facts stand clear in this regard. Rather than the violence of Kandhamal being a vote getter for the BJP or BJD, it eroded their support base. Pralay Kolangu, Professor of political science at JNU (Jahalwal Nehru University) explains, *"I personally noted this during my visit to Kandhamal. There was an undeniable and palpable dissatisfaction amongst the people towards the BJP, BJD, VHP, RSS and other 'Hindutva' groups. This is the theme of my next article. These events have not translated into votes for the BJP etc. Rather it is likely that we will see stronger support for the opposition in the upcoming elections."*[CCCLVIII]

Within less than 48 hours of the massacre of the Swami and four of his followers, J.B. Patnaik, Orissa's Congress Party leader attempted to overthrow the BJD-BJP State administration. Within a day of the assassination the Congress Party rejected the State's judicial probe and demanded a CBI investigation. Congress Party leader J.B. Patnaik declared that the Christians would never do such a thing as assassinate Swami Lakshmananda but didn't reveal his source for this conclusion. J.B. Patnaik challenged the BJP to back up their relevant complaints by withdrawing support from the Naveen Patnaik BJD government. In a memorandum submitted to the Orissa Governor M.C. Bhandare, the Congress Party alleged that the BJD and BJP had intentionally fomented

CCCLVIII **Author Interview with Prof Pralay Kolangu** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 22, 2008

unrest and communal violence. They urged the Governor to step in and take control of the Government in the name of protecting the minorities. In other words the Congress Party urged the Governor to topple the government in the name of an allegedly '*hapless*' minority. Unverifiable rumors of atrocities and attacks filled the airwaves and the print media. As if on cue, the Congress Party had begun its campaign to undermine the State.

Smelling blood, the Congress leadership forced the apparent deficiencies of the BJP and BJD into the National debate. *"Lashing out at the State Government of Karnataka and Orissa for failing to deliver good governance, senior Congress leader M. Veerapa Moily on Sunday said that the States should immediately take steps to restore confidence among their people. Refusing to accept the recent violence in the States as communal clashes, Moily said that the attacks were part of an attempt of the respective governments to terrorize the people of a particular community. 'It is not a Hindu Christian clash or any other confrontation among religious groups but a deliberate attempt of the State Governments to terrorize the people. The Governments' have worked in collaboration with the VHP and Bajrang Dal. The Governments have proven themselves inefficient in delivering their duties."* [ccclix]

The Christians broadcast this theme on both the National and International level in a public letter to Mahatma Gandhi in honor of his birthday, *"The Chief Ministers, particularly of Orissa, offer words but no action. In Orissa, the system of governance is paralyzed. The legal system is in self-imposed suspension. We are intimidated from filing FIRs (First Incident Reports) in local police stations. The District authorities do not allow relief materials and personnel to come to our rescue…we are sad to say that we have lost our confidence in the State."*[ccclx]

Christians are the bedrock of the BJD support base in Kandhamal. For them to lose faith in the BJD governance spells potential disaster for the BJD's political fortunes. Congress Party representatives were eveready to play the role of the sympathetic opposition and the '*pinprick of conscience*' for the ruling administration.

And the Press, specifically the Times of India, are eveready to broadcast the Congress Party message of empathy with the suffering Christian Minority. *"Chairman of the Congress team and former Parliamentarian Sriballav Panigrahi stated, 'Both the District Collector and Superintendent of Police of Kandhamal should be booked under criminal*

[ccclix] **Deccan Herald** *'K'taka and Orissa failed to deliver good governance' Bangalore*' Karnataka October 13, 2008
[ccclx] **Letter to Mahatma Gandhi** Union of Catholic Asian News October 3, 2008

proceedings and action as they are responsible for the entire incidents due to their inability to protect the people. The police without providing security to the people asked them to vacate the Church for 15 days.' Mr. Panigrahi alleged. He alleged that the Father of the Madhupur church requested security from the Administration, 'but he was refused and asked to vacate the church for 15 days as the possibility of attacks on the church were assumed by the Police,' he criticized. If the Administration was well informed about the attack, why security arrangements were not made?' he questioned. 'The Police were well aware about the movements of that group but was giving a silent support of the activists.' He said that the Government is quite responsible for all these incidents that occurred soon after the Kandhamal incident."[CCCLXI]

Thus we see the pattern, a kind of grand design by which the violence is portrayed as the sole responsibility of the Government and its allies. The allegedly progressive and secular Congress and Communists step in as the champions and voice of the voiceless and sole guardians of justice and humanitarian concern. The media trumpets and spotlights their every word and action as a ray of hope, sanity and dignity in a world of communal chaos and religious hatred. Grand gestures are made. *"Meanwhile in the State Assembly the Opposition Congress disrupted proceedings right through the day protesting against the anarchy prevailing in the Kandhamal district. They demanded that an All-Party meeting be held and a delegation proceed to Kandhamal to restore peace."*[CCCLXII]

Ironically no one mentions that blocking the State Assembly from doing its work of governance is probably not the best option during a crisis. Nor do they say how a delegation of bickering and biased politicians is going to '*restore peace*.' At the end of the day with all the evidence stripped of the rhetoric and hype the conclusion is clear. The vote-bank theory is indeed based on genuine observations; and in regards to Kandhamal the beneficiaries of the political windfall are obviously the Congress Party, the Communists and the Maoists.

Observers have noted the BJP's lack luster response to the Kandhamal crisis. BJP representative and spokesperson Tarun Vijay reveals that, *"The 2009 elections are coming. The BJP is depending upon the crucial support of various regional parties such as Orissa's BJD. If the BJP were to put too much pressure on the BJD it may backfire on them*

CCCLXI **Times of India** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa August 30, 2008
CCCLXII **Statesman News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa August 27, 2008

and their National aspirations. In other words, the BJP must forgive the small blows in order to deliver a knockout blow in the All-India battle in the upcoming General Elections."[CCCLXIII]

Thus when we step back and look at the big picture it is clear that the Kandhamal crisis threatens the overall political fortunes of the BJP, destabilized the BJD-BJP coalition and threatened their dependable vote base. In an area long lost to Congress and the Left, this same Kandhamal crisis gave Congress, the Communists and allies new relevance and a much needed opportunity for the development of a dependable vote bank. With millions of Christians in Orissa now firmly looking to alternatives to the BJD, the harvest of votes is theirs for the taking.

On the National level, the Congress Party successfully poisoned the well of goodwill between the BJP and the BJD. The Central Government's threat to revoke the power of the State Government by the establishment of Presidential rule served to enhance the Congress image as a benefactor and its role as a potential dictator. This only served to deepen the political divide even further. What deals were made behind closed doors can only be known by the very few involved.

Despite the oft-repeated claims that communal violence is at the core of the BJP support base, the fact is no one votes for violence. People however do vote to be safe from violence and being manipulated by fear, they vote Congress. The communal violence gives the Congress Party, Communists and other Leftists relevance and thwarts the BJP agenda. By maintaining and cultivating a negative image of the BJP, the mainstream media, Congress and other likeminded groups have been able to develop a strong political base. A primary goal of the Congress Party is to strip away the BJD's Christian support base by highlighting its *'unholy'* alliance with the '*minority-hating'* BJP. Thus there can be no doubt that the violence does indeed translate into votes. But rather than benefiting the BJP, it is the Congress Party that benefits on both the regional and National level.

While false theories blame the VHP and others for the violence, India's UN delegation clearly identified the roots of the Kandhamal crisis. Kandhamal's December 2007 riots took a prominent place in the discussions during a recent UN General Assembly periodic review. Some nations such as the UK and Belgium challenged India regarding Orissa and the Dalits.

CCCLXIII **Author Interview with Tarun Vijay** New Delhi, India November 2, 2008

"The United Kingdom asked for additional information on (a) reports of attacks against persons from religious or other minorities, in particular in Orissa State; (b) steps to implement treaty body recommendations on the Armed Forced Special Powers Act; (c) anti-conversion legislation; and (c) the communal violence crimes bill."[CCCLXIV]

The response of the Indian delegation clearly defines the reality of the Kandhamal crisis. Contradicting the media hype and political manipulation of India's Congress Party and Leftist elite, the Indian UN delegation identified the authentic cause of the violence.

"In relation to the communal disturbance that erupted in the tribal dominated district of Kandhamal, Orissa on 24 December 2007 between tribal Hindus (Kui) and Christians (Panas), the Indian delegation noted that the underlying cause appeared to be the long standing opposition by the tribal Hindus to the Christians' demand to be categorized as a Scheduled Tribe. In the clashes, 3 persons died and 25 were injured. The clashes led to the damage of private and public property. The situation was brought under control. One hundred and twenty-five cases have been registered and 173 persons have been arrested. The state Government has also ordered judicial probe to inquire into the incident. Further, 284 Peace Committees have been formed which have held 350 meetings so far. The State government has announced a rehabilitation package to those whose houses have been damaged and ex gratia of Rs. 100,000 to the next kin of the three deceased. The Prime Minister assured Christian delegations that the Government would take all steps to provide full security and protect the religious freedom guaranteed by the Constitution to all citizens and that it would not tolerate any efforts aimed at disturbing the communal harmony or secular fabric of the country. India noted that some states have passed anti-conversion acts to check and regulate forced conversions."[CCCLXV]

No mention of the VHP or BJP was made. It is obvious to any candid observer that the blame lay elsewhere. India's UN delegation highlighted the Christian Pana's demands as the primary factor leading to the violence. As the world confronted India, demanding an explanation for the Kandhamal violence, India's UN delegation identified the Christian Panas as being directly responsible for the Kandhamal violence.

In early January 2009, it appeared that the conspiracy against Orissa's BJD-BJP alliance government was coming to fruition. Simultaneously, a Supreme Court verdict said that it

CCCLXIV **UN General Assembly Universal Periodic Review** *'India: Questions and Answers-Session 1'* March 2008
CCCLXV **Ibid.**

would not allow persecution of minorities and requisitioned Orissa's government to dissolve the assembly if it cannot protect the Christians, allegedly targeted during the recent riots.

A bench comprising of the Chief Justice K G Balakrishnan, Justice Markandey Katju and Justice P Sathasivam asked the BJD - led government to also reconstruct the churches damaged during the violence. *"We will not accept the persecution of minority. If the state government is unable to protect them it should resign. We have to protect the minorities…No minority community should be insecure in the country,"* Justice Katju said. As if following a script written by the Congress Party, the Supreme Court spoke without taking into account the specifics of the Kandhamal crisis.

As the political pressure mounted on the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) to kick out the BJP and thus '*prove its secular credentials*,' media reports reported that the BJD leadership began considering the formation of an alternate alliance.

"The alliance between the Biju Janata Dal and Bharatiya Janata Party is on the rocks now. The cracks in the ruling alliance came to light on Tuesday when BJD Rajya Sabha Member Pyarimohan Mohapatra said that political equations were never static. Mohapatra, who virtually manages the BJD's entire organizational matters, told journalists in Bolangir that equations between parties are `always dynamic and never static'. The BJD leader gave the reply when media persons asked him if BJD was thinking of snapping ties with the BJP before the forthcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. Mohapatra, however, did not give a straight reply on the question whether BJD would sever ties with the BJP ahead of the elections. Mohapatra's statement assumes significance as the BJD was no longer in a mood to continue with its alliance with the BJP as the later had started losing its base in the state."[CCCLXVI]

Distinguished journalist Farzand Ahmed of '*India Today*' gives more details regarding the impact of the Kandhamal mayhem upon the fortunes of the BJP. In his article *'Scripting a new alliance in Orissa'* he verifies the obvious reality that the Kandhamal violence has opened up new wounds in the BJD-BJP alliance and appears to be fulfilling the ambitions of the Congress and Leftists.

"Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik who has mastered the art of conducting bloodless political surgery is all set to dump Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and script a new secular alliance before the crucial twin Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, just a few months away. And if that happens

[CCCLXVI] **Kalinga Times** 'BJD-BJP alliance in Odisha on the rocks' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa January 14, 2009

then it would be a great setback for BJP at the national level at a time when every seat in the Lok Sabha would be important for it to return to power. Even before the seat sharing talks between the ruling BJD and BJP could formally begin, Naveen indicated to BJP where it stood now. Naveen is reported to have sent out a strong message to 10-year-old and trusted ally BJP after its political stock dwindled while Naveen and his Biju Janata Dal's popularity soared despite Kandhamal carnage and administration's failure to check communal campaigners. Besides a large number of locally influential Congressmen and the leftists have indicated that they were ready to join hands with him if he got rid of BJP, which being in government was playing the role of an umbrella for Hindutva forces including VHP and Bajrang Dal. CPI general secretary A.B. Bardhan last week told Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik that he was left with two alternatives—either to resign or get rid of its communal partner - the BJP, which is causing a lot of embarrassment to the country. Bardhan's remark was taken as hint that new grouping of CPI, NCP and JMM might rally round him…In view of the changing scenario Naveen made it clear that BJD was not prepared to concede more seats to BJP and that it was even prepared to go alone in the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls…Convinced over the need to have a new and secular alliance Naveen has now started preparing list of candidates for all the 147 Assembly constituencies."[CCCLXVII]

However, on January 17, 2009, CM Naveen Patnaik put an end to the speculation.

"The speculation about breaking of the alliance between the Biju Janata Dal and Bharatiya Janata Party has come to an end with Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik hinting that the coalition was on. Observing that the two-party alliance was successfully running the government in the state for the past nine years, Patnaik, however, indicated that a change in the distribution of seats between the two parties was likely before the coming general elections. The leaders of both the parties should sit down to discuss about the changes required with regard to sharing of the Lok Sabha and Assembly seats following delimitation of the constituencies, Patnaik said here on Saturday. Patnaik's words assumes importance as many leaders of his party were favoring that BJD should break its alliance with the BJP and contest all the 127 Assembly seats and 21 Parliamentary constituencies all alone. Taking exception to the remarks of the BJD leaders, many BJP leaders had taken a tough stand against them. BJD state unit president Suresh Pujari, however, had said that coalition was a compulsion for them. Sources in the BJD said that the Chief Minister and his close associates in the party were in favour of continuing the alliance

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CCCLXVII **India Today** 'Scripting a new alliance in Orissa' January 13, 2009

with was BJP. They, however, would offer less number of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats to the BJP, sources added."[CCCLXVIII]

However within days of this, the Communist leadership claimed that it had been approached by the BJD. The Communists have long attempted to create a third political alternate front to the Congress and BJP parties.

'CPM mulls Orissa tie-up after Naveen feelers, CPI sounds out Dal (U) in Bihar' "The Left parties have set their sights on BJP allies, especially the Biju Janata Dal and the Janata Dal (United), as they look to form a non-BJP, non-Congress alliance at the Centre. The BJD leadership has sent feelers to top CPM leaders, including Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, for a possible understanding, Left sources said. Naveen Patnaik's BJD is getting "increasingly uncomfortable with the BJP and there are signs" that it might join the third alternative at the Centre, the sources said. The anti-Christian violence in Orissa's Kandhamal district was a point of discord between the BJP and the BJD, the Left sources said."[CCCLXIX]

Here we see direct proof as to who truly benefits from the communal violence.

"Detection is, or ought to be, an exact science and should be treated in the same cold and unemotional manner."[CCCLXX]

In this famous quote attributed to Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, we find the exact ingredient that is missing from the discussion regarding the true culprits behind the murder of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and its violent aftermath. Based solely upon emotional accusations, the attempts to condemn the BJP are without foundation in the facts.

Those who benefit from a crime are most likely to have committed the crime in question. This basic rule, when applied to the Indian political situation, gives us one unequivocal answer. The true beneficiaries of India's ongoing waves of anti-Minority violence are the Congress Party and the Leftists. Without these crimes, the anti-BJP forces lose their relevance. As long as India's Minorities can retain their committed animosity and antipathy towards the BJP, BJP ambitions will remain thwarted. As long as India's Minorities continue to fear and loathe the BJP, the Hindu political party will

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[CCCLXVIII] **Kalinga Times** '*BJD-BJP alliance to continue: Naveen Patnaik*' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa January 17, 2009

[CCCLXIX] **The Telegraph** '*Left eyes peeled on BJP allies-CPM mulls Orissa tie-up after Naveen feelers, CPI sounds out Dal(U) in Bihar*' January 22, 2009

[CCCLXX] **Adventures of Sherlock Holmes** '*Study in Scarlet*' Arthur Conan Doyle

never achieve a political majority in the Parliament. Notwithstanding the continuous and shrill accusations against the BJP as the source of India's Anti-Minority violence, it is the Congress Party that benefits. This is a plain and unequivocal fact that can only be overlooked and obsticated by a deliberate and vicious media campaign. Similar to propaganda campaigns of the past, such as WW II America's anti-Japanese racist propaganda campaign, Hitler's anti-Jewish vitriol, Soviet Russia's and Maoist China's agit-prop, the media's anti-BJP campaign is designed to dehumanize and devalue the Hindu activists. Thus when a Hindu activist is murdered, few feel any sense of shame as they blame the victim for inciting the murderer. Such dehumanization of the victim has always been the goal of such political propaganda.

A Medium for Chaos

"In this country, secularism in practice meant romancing the minority and demonizing the majority." Shakkar Gupta, Editor, New Indian Express

Obfuscation: *"To totally obscure with non-germane information in a verbose manner, with the intent to provide a non-answer, and provide total befuddlement."*

This perfectly illustrates the modus operendi of the Indian media. India's media is in a league of its own. It presents itself as beholden to none and as the fourth estate and a responsible branch of civil society. It claims itself to be the voice of reason, the conscience of the system and guardian of the public weal. Though this ideal is at the basis of a responsible media, India's media is infamously and obviously far removed from such a role. The pattern and record speaks for itself. A graphic example would be the recent anti-Bihari riots in Assam. A false story detailing a Bihari's rape of an Assamese girl led to a public response leading to much violence, injury, destruction and death. Despite the media's role in initiating the mayhem, the obvious disconnect between the law, social welfare concerns, the people and the media, no action nor resolution was taken. The powers that be, behind the media, continued as before untouched by the law and the plight of a victimized people.

The examples of such media-induced mayhem are many with the post-Godhra/Gujarat and Kandhamal violence standing out. A major ingredient that must be recognized is the process by which the public, the Indian masses, imbibe the news. There basically two separate avenues in which news and information is disseminated to the masses. There is the National English language Press and then there is the local language or

vernacular press. These two channels of information are noticeably distinct in their presentation of events. Generally the English media presents a dethatched, and at many times, distorted twist to events. The local press reflects local and native regional perspectives and is much more careful to give voice to its localized readers and viewership.

On a practical level the local media outlets rely solely upon the business and support of its constituents. Whereas the major English media is nationwide and many times foreign owned and can function regardless of local considerations and concerns. This has created the dichotomy of two distinct and powerful voices that function in the same arena yet report on the same events, many times in a completely opposite manner. This simply serves to muddy the waters and cloud the issues. Thus when an incident occurs, the presentation of the event is given in a conflicting manner, the national media will present its superficial view that ignores the '*on the ground*' reality. Local media will, generally, present a more complete picture of local events. A majority of Indians rely on local sources for their news and public response must be understood in this context.

Another key dynamic to understanding the impact of the Indian media is the socio-economic conditions reflected by a majority of the consumers of media content. This group forms the largest block of media consumers. However these consumers represent a nationwide groupthink that sees local issues as paramount. Therefore this population group is easily broken down into a multitude of groups with local issues and concerns. This is reflected quite obviously when we recognize the powerful impact and dominance of local political parties. The English language nationwide Press represents a nationwide consumer base that has vastly higher socio-economic living standard and income. In other words though their numbers are few their impact is greater. Thus as the vast underprivileged class is seething with media induced tension, the decision makers and economically empowered class act in a detached manner. The English press blames the discontent on socio-political causes; it ignores the reality of an informed local media and its impact on the people. With an approach that is ambivalent towards the facts and biased in its presentation, the English language press is suspect in the eyes of many local people. The reporting many times conflicts with the local reality. Conflict and social chaos are thus stimulated.

The media, as its name intents, is meant to be a via medium for facts and events to reach the public. This foundation has unfortunately been abandoned long ago. Today's media

is a tool that manipulates information according to circumstances. Events are presented, not as they are, but as they wish them to be. The media's manipulation of events surrounding the Kandhamal crisis clearly reflects this. Events are presented but the context is changed or just plainly ignored. Bias is rampant and the political agendas clear.

It is imperative to mention that, while the Hindus are mercilessly maligned, the Christian community of Kandhamal has also expressed dissatisfaction with the media. Nevertheless when comparing the media distortion of the Hindu position to that of the Christians', there can be no doubt regarding the news media's extreme anti-Hindu bias.

Times of India's response to events in Kandhamal make a perfect case study. After the massacre of Swami Lakshmananda and his followers the *Times of India* failed to carry the story. As far as they were concerned it was a non-event. Yet the minor incidents that immediately followed the killings were highlighted and magnified beyond reality. Events were presented but the timelines and context were either changed or treated as irrelevant. Blame was assigned without investigation and charges made before facts could be ascertained. In the eyes of some Hindus, the *Times of India* handling of the events made it loud and clear. The impact of the murder of a Hindu spiritual and political leader upon the emotional and psychological wellbeing of a society was irrelevant. As if on cue, the reflective response of an anguished people became the story. The effect became the issue at the expense of the cause. *Times of India* adopted the cause of the Pana Christians and acted as its megaphone to the world. Their allegations against the Hindus were published unquestioningly as if it were proven fact. *Times of India* is not alone in this. *The Statesman,* another major Indian English language paper revealed its bias. In an article regarding Kandhamal it presented a classic propaganda piece. Using a style reminiscent of agit-prop it attempts to sway the reader through not so subtle means. Emotional and sympathetic terminology is applied. Maligning the police efforts to maintain stability the Statesman wrote, *"…not only were their places of worship attacked across the district but sadly even the midnight mass and services could not take place since yesterday. Earlier a few police officers had requested leaders of the religious minority not to hold the usual service and cautioned that if they do so it will be at their own risk."*[CCCLXXI]

[CCCLXXI] **Statesman News Service** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa December 25, 2007

We see the media itself assigning emotional states in an effort to develop empathy of its readers for the Christians. It blames the police force for doing its job of maintaining law, order and peace. Knowing full well the entire cycle of violence began with belligerent displays of religion, the police wisely advised the Christians to forgo any grand affairs during the midst of a war zone. Common sense however has been turned into an act of oppression against a *'desperate, sincere and peace loving'* minority. In the same article an attack on the homes of Padmanabha Behera, allegedly a primary villain in the entire scenario who's inappropriate activities forced his removal from the Government are presented in a sympathetic manner. *"Minister Padmanabha Behera who was in Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa was perturbed over the tension in the area after the attacks upon his native house. Most of the people going to the church were startled to find police deployed in front of the church and this probably diminished the jolly spirit. The Bandh had an impact on the celebrations especially at Parala Khemundi where the usual merriment and gaiety were missing…the Bandh had no impact on the business establishments of Parala Khemundi."*[CCCLXXII]

The bias is quite obvious when it writes of the BJP. The language used is quite different and the imagery threatening and dark. *"The 4 hour Bandh from 8 AM to 12 PM called by the BJP disrupted traffic putting commuters to great hardship. Traffic was stopped by piling of tires and putting them on fire, and all the routes to the district were sealed off by the cadres who were an in aggressive mood. Police were deployed in all places and armed police were stationed in front of all churches to ward off any unsavory incidents."*[CCCLXXIII]

Suddenly the activists are cadres, the term generally used to describe the Maoists, and they have all been identified as BJP. This is but 1 example of the type of reporting rampant throughout the Indian media. The minority groups are always portrayed as the sympathetic helpless victims worthy of pity and support. In media-speak '*the minorities are you*' the average everyday person just trying to get by. The Hindu activists are always the '*ominous other*', the big bad wolf, the dripping fanged, claw-extended beasts predating upon simple hard working folk. The Hindus are often headlined as '*baying for blood*' as in the Times of India.[CCCLXXIV] This image is

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[CCCLXXII] **Ibid.**
[CCCLXXIII] **Ibid.**
[CCCLXXIV] **Times of India** October 6, 2008

reinforced and magnified in the hearts and minds of the voters. The clear intention is the undermining of the Hindu political support base.

At times, the media acts as a kind of voice for select politicians. Free of charge, the media will broadcast the talking points for political messages disguised as news. *"AICC President Sonia Gandhi…on Saturday blamed the 'saffron' party and its sister organizations for the Kandhamal violence. She told the Congress Working Committee, "What we are witnessing in States such as Orissa recently, is a carefully orchestrated ploy by the BJP and its sister organizations to inflame religious prejudices and passions. This has been their strategy all along. Every time their position is weakened and elections are around the corner, the BJP, RSS, Bajrang Dal and the VHP launch vicious communal campaigns to divide and polarize the society with no regard for the loss of lives. Exposing their mischievous designs is the biggest challenge before us."*[CCCLXXV]

In language condemning the BJP, *Times of India* writes, *"For the BJP sandwiched between the lust for power…"* Any march, protest or Bandh by the BJP allies is presented as a nuisance at best and fascistic violence at its worst. *Times of India* headlined the Hindu response as *"Seer Murder Sparks Rage and Rampage,' 'Doordarshan Kendra and Educational Institutions Attacked in City' and 'Protesters on the rampage as Bandh cripples Orissa'* Statesman News titled its article, *"Bandh turns into Hooligans day out.' "Palpable fear and tension prevailed in most parts of the State as VHP and its affiliates backed actively by the BJP imposed a 12 hour Bandh and criminals targeted places of worship, orphanages and minority institutions."* In a loaded report seemingly scripted to denigrate the memorial Bandh, the article intentionally placed VHP and BJP with criminals.

Despite the reality that medical related activity was exempted from the Bandh, the media published claims that the Bandh disrupted people in need of medical help. *"A doctor couple pleaded to be allowed to go to the hospital and requested policemen for help but was flatly told to take care of themselves. An ambulance carrying a doctor to hospital duty was attacked."*[CCCLXXVI] Both the *Times* and *Statesman* articles featured photos designed to add a sense of menace to the image of vicious and fanatic Hindus. Yet Communists, secular or Congress events are highlighted as "*calls for peace, justice and harmony*". When the secular organization ONS (Oriya Nari Samaj) marched in

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CCCLXXV **Times of India** September 10, 2008
CCCLXXVI **Statesman News Service** August 25, 2008

Bhuvaneshwar the media headlined the event with the phrase "*ONS to Redeem State's Image*".[CCCLXXVII]

Conversely, the *New Indian Express* portrayed a memorial rally held in honor of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati as a cynical move. *"The Sangh Parivar hopes to cash in on the anger of the Hindus in the after math of the killing."*[CCCLXXVIII] No such language is used in reference to Congress or Communist rallies.

Hype and exaggeration are a frequent component of Indian media reporting. During the December 2007 riots, reports that claimed 7 young girls had fled their hostel for the jungles were defused by the administration. The 7 girls had, in reality, gone home for vacation. Yet Christian leaders spread rumors that they were missing, either kidnapped or had fled in fear of their lives. When miscreants exploded firecrackers near Christian relief camps on September 29th, the *New Indian Express* carried a frontpage article with the headline *'Kandhamal on the Boil again.' '3 Blasts rock relief camps. The bombs, handmade and low intensity went off at Nugagaon, Baliguda and Mahasinghi relief camps…"* Next paragraph the bombs are suddenly revealed to be crackers by DIG R.P. Koche *'had info about crackers exploding only at Nuagaon relief camp."* Then the next paragraph again refers to the crackers as bombs quoting an inmate, *"Since they have been exploding bombs successfully near the heavily guarded relief camp. There is no guarantee that the explosion will not take place in other camps."* Yet again in the very next paragraph the bombs morph back into crackers. Interestingly only when referring to the police statements do we get an accurate reference. *"Police claimed to recover an unexploded cracker near Baliguda relief camp."* Adding a gruesome subtext to the story the article carried the subheading *'More decomposed bodies keep popping out'.*[CCCLXXIX]

Another aspect of the media reporting or lack of reporting is in regard to the Christian response. The Church is solely focused upon its own interests and concerns. Their involvement is clearly partisan. Their public statements and press releases are partisan as well and therefore unreliable. Despite this reality, the media quotes and reports the Church's views as unbiased statements of fact. Pronouncements are made, scripted and directed by biased sources. The '*everyone*

[CCCLXXVII] **Statesman News Service** October 24,2008
[CCCLXXVIII] **Express News Service** November 14, 2008
[CCCLXXIX] **New Indian Express** September 30, 2008

knows the Bajrang Dal is burning churches' psychology becomes the order of the day. Unfortunately the '*everyone knows'* concept has led to quite a few lynchings, 'witch' burnings, murders and hangings over the centuries. While every sneeze by a Hindu is sensationalized as the end of humanity and the alleged plight of the non-Hindu editorialized as a holocaust, true horrors are ignored.

The brutal desecration and mutilation of the girls' school's headmistress Bhaktimayee's body after her murder was not reported upon by any media outlet. Responsible reporting is the excuse given. Coming from perhaps the most irresponsible media in the world, this is almost comical if it were not the primary factor leading to the deaths of so many. Repressing or suppressing a trauma only leads to severe reactions. This has been validated by psychology and social scientists.

The media has created its own timeline that is completely out of synch with the reality of Kandhamal. In this pseudo reality, Kandhamal was a kind of *Garden of Eden*. The trouble began only upon the arrival of the serpent-like VHP tempting the innocent people with the apple of communalism. Ever since that day the peace has been shattered. The facts prove this to be a myth. The violence in 1994 was just as intense yet the VHP and Bajrang Dal presence was virtually non-existent.

The media plays a very sinister role as a propaganda outlet for the Maoists and other terrorists. While brief snippets are allowed to Hindu organizations and leaders, entire articles are devoted to the Maoist message. The Maoist message is broadcast loud and clear with minimal editorialization. The September 9th edition of *The Statesman* is an example of this. The vitriol of the PLGA (People's Liberation Guerilla Army) is given full coverage enhancing the terror group's outreach efforts at the expense of civil society. Misinformation is another widely used tactic. The media's intentional choice of words is used to distort the image of the Hindu group in question. We see frequent examples of this media manipulation in its coverage of the Hindu activist youth organization Bajrang Dal. Bajrang refers to the famous and beloved monkey god Hanuman and the group takes its inspiration from this very same Hanuman. Knowing full well that the connection to Hanuman may spark fascination in many Hindus and foreigners, the media intentionally translates Bajrang Dal as '*lightning force'* or '*thunder warriors'* or some other such menacing sounding name.

Taking advantage of the media's dark portrayal of the Bajrang Dal the Anglican Church officials released an article claiming Swami Lakshmananda was "*a leader of Bajrang Dal (a radical section of the Hindu Nationalist organization RSS). The leader of the Bajrang Dal was trying to convert Dalit and tribal Christians forcibly back to Hinduism and was shot dead by a member of a Maoist group*".[CCCLXXX]

By falsely portraying Swamiji as the leader of the Bajrang Dal (a group that '*everyone knows*' are terrorists so they must be) his murder is thus understandable. The article continues to rationalize his murder by stating the Indian Government is taking steps to ban the Bajrang Dal. *"They should be encouraged in their action against such groups."*[CCCLXXXI]

Such distortions are not new. B.B. Panda the former DG of Police in Orissa told the Wadhwa Commission that the media completely fabricated information involving him. According to his testimony, the *Indian Express* newspaper directly misquoted him to make its case against the VHP and Bajrang Dal, "*Over 50 people suspected to be the activists of Bajrang Dal and the VHP were involved in the incident and so far 49 persons have been arrested."*[CCCLXXXII] The problem with this quote is that it had never been made by the Director General (DG) of Police B.B. Panda. Despite writing the newspaper and directly demanding a retraction, the *Indian Express* refused to retract the story and ignored his requests. (Wadhwa Commission)

Here we see a clear case of direct manipulation of events. Rather than observing and reporting the news, the media took an active role in the events. To the average reader the words came from Director General (DG) of Police B.B. Panda. The Press is merely the via media. Yet here the media appears to have concocted its own version of events. For B.B. Panda, The Director General (DG) of Police, his own words and authority had been used as a political weapon to charge and condemn the Bajrang Dal, VHP and RSS. It is interesting to note the implication of this act by the media. The very need for the media to plant false quotes condemning the Hindu groups strongly suggests of conspiracy. The very fact that the accusations against the Sangh Parivar rely upon innuendo, false reports and unsubstantiated theories indicates that there can be no truth to their claims. Despite the thousands of accusations

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CCCLXXX **Anglican Communion News Service** September 22, 2008
CCCLXXXI **Ibid.**
CCCLXXXII **Express News Service** January 5, 1999

against the Hindu activists, the evidence is sparse and many times non-existent. False testimonials have been created and mythologies expounded. Political theories have been created as the alibis for these myths. This is the foundation of the anti-Hindu Nationalist forces. Without it there is no authenticity to their claims. Yet even that '*authenticity*' is based upon a multitude of artificial constructs.

Another example of the media's aggressive hostile involvement is found in its reporting of a tragic event that took place in Orissa in February 7, 1999. Piggybacking upon the Graham Staines murder, the media pounced upon the murder of two Christians. Justice Wadhwa wrote in his report, *"The incident again attracted a great deal of publicity in the media including e-media. Newspapers came up with headings, '2 Christians Killed, I injured in Orissa' '2 tribals Christians done to death in Kandhamal' and 'Orissa hunts for Christian killers'. Additionally DG P.J. John Nayak reportedly said, 'The communal angle to the attempted rape and murder could not be ruled out.' …a certain political party even blamed the State and Central Governments and stated that the inaction…encouraged miscreants to commit yet another crime in Kandhamal. In short as per various reports that appeared in the newspapers, the incident was to be taken as an attack on the Christians."* Indeed it was an attack. But the truth of the attack was far different than the media's spin. *"Ultimately investigation revealed the crime was committed by a relative of the victims. This relative was also a Christian."* The victims were indeed Christians as was the perpetrator. No retractions were issued and millions of people continue to believe the incident to be one of Hindu aggression.

We also find that the media constantly coloring events as religious clashes in complete contradiction of the facts. The December 8, 1998 incident in which some Christian Panas had robbed a group of Kandhas led to sudden conflagration in which many homes were burnt and at least 2 killed. Despite knowing the basis for this violence, the media floated stories of yet another religious based conflict. Again several weeks later, on February 9, 1999 23 Hindu homes were torched, the media ignored it. The Hindu Kandhas guaranteed response to the burning of their homes was instantly flashed around the world as "*Hindu Fanatics Attack Christians*". The initial victimization of the Hindu tribals went unnoticed and unreported. *"The unfortunate incident was largely unreported."* Justice Wadhwa observed.

More recently, prior to the December 2007 Kandhamal riots, no reports made mention of the VHP, RSS, BJP, Bajrang Dal etc. Then, as if on cue, the media thrust

the Hindu activists center stage of the entire Kandhamal drama. The entire storyline changed dramatically. The long term conditions and underlying causes were all forgotten as the crisis was forged into a political weapon by the media and politicians. The authentic obstacles and stumbling blocks to peace were given short notice.

The social foment created by the Indian media and Leftist elite has created a new and modern form of prejudice that is just as ugly and inhumane as any other. It guises itself as a socialist humanitarian concern for minorities yet paradoxically, it is biased against millions of the Hindu majority. It's an arrogant assumption that allows for the instant damnation of any act in the name of Hinduism and the adoration of any act in celebration of anything else, just as long as it not Hindu. It is straight out prejudice. Yet with the media's constant cacophony of accusations the prejudice is rationalized as a sign of secular and social concern.

India's media downplays authentic threats and dangers to the people. It demonizes any attempts at self reliance and security. Thousands upon thousands of Indians have died at the hands of Jihadists and Maoist terror attacks. The media not only downplays these attacks, it rationalizes them. During the September 13, 2008 Delhi bomb blasts news reporters became virtual mouthpieces for the terrorists. As Delhiites lay in their own blood, the media spouted the perverted rationales of the terrorists. Beyond that the media theorized that *'the blasts are a response to police efforts against terrorism'.* It was a stunning statement made by a callous and sinister media. One can only wonder if indeed the media is in the control of the very same groups terrorizing the people. Similar to the psychotic killer's use of media as a follow up to his mass murders, Indian media gloats upon the ongoing terror. It has lost any sense of social responsibility. This same media wastes thousands of broadcasts hours on promoting the inane thoughts and words of allegedly concerned socialists and human rights group representatives. Yet these same individuals or organizations are absolutely silent about the Maoist atrocities and acts of terror. Rather they focus on the alleged danger of Hindu fundamentalism as the greatest danger to society. Somehow these intellectuals ignore the statistics confirming the actual perpetrators of mayhem. The body count says it all. But in secular India buildings are more precious than human lives.

The self appointed guardians of Indian secularism have built careers upon a foundation of accusations leveled against India's traditionalists. They act as the embedded overground voice of the murderous underground. They do their part to target the very groups that act as obstacles to the nefarious intentions of the Maoists. As the Maoists murder their physical bodies, the mainstream media and the Leftist elite savage their reputations. There is a phenomenon in this.

We find that the Maoists, Islamic Jihadists, the Communists, the Christian Church, the Congress Party, the Indian media and Pakistani military and leadership all speak with one voice when speaking of the RSS and the overall Hindu Traditionalist's organizations. This was made imminently clear when the Orissa Maoist leader Sabyasachi Panda leader made his statements '*confessing*' to the murder of Swami Lakshmananda. His vitriol against the Swami, the VHP and the RSS is a carbon copy of the words and propaganda daily regurgitated by the Indian media, Congress Party, Communists, Left wing thinkers and writers, Christians and Muslim leaders and by the Pakistani and Bangladeshi Press and political hardliners.

As the war against India rages on a native response has arisen. Yet this native response is pilloried and demonized. Ironically the Secular Leftist apologists constantly invoke the image of *'a people driven to desperation'* by overbearing Hindus or police actions. However their logic falls flat and does not extend beyond their artificial construction. For if desperation and oppression can drive a minority to activism it could also be a factor towards the development of the very same Hindu activism they condemn. In other words, the idea that millions of Hindus have become active supporters of the RSS, VHP and BJP cannot be based upon mere chauvinism but rather it is based upon authentic concerns. The threats to Hinduism are obvious and the response is an attempt to deal with these real dangers and predicaments. This response has been effective in thwarting the schemes of those inimical to India's progress. The enemies of India recognize the Hindu activists as the greatest obstacle to the fulfillment of their schemes.

Just after 9/11, as Pakistan was choosing its destiny, Musharaf gave frequent media interviews. In a *CNN* interview in October 2001 Musharaf expressed his anguish over the many revelations regarding Islamist terrorism. He felt that the media was prejudiced against Islam so he asked, *"Why don't you focus on the Bajrang Dal, Shiv Sena, LTTE as well? They are all Hindu terrorist groups."* So to put it bluntly, why and

who are these Indian based groups that speak the same language as Musharraf and the Maoists? Why do their agendas run upon a parallel course? What powers control India's media? Why do their opinions and agendas appear to be in synch with that of the terrorists and Pakistan's ISI?

There is a certain disingenuousness and dishonest methodology at work. We see this in the media debates and opinion pieces in Indian journals. As an example, a representative of the NCM (National Commission for Minorities) defended illegal migration by stating that, *"It is true that there are illegal migrants coming from Bangladesh. However they are not just Muslims. There are Hindus also. Yet the Muslims are labeled illegals while Hindus are called refugees."*[CCCLXXXIII]

The above statement requires a complete abandonment of the political and historical reality involved in order to be accepted. First the sheer number of Muslims vs. Hindus arriving from Bangladesh clearly defines the issue as a Bangladeshi Muslim phenomenon. Second the overall lack of religious freedom in Bangladesh combined with the frequent atrocities inflicted upon the minority population forces the Hindus and Buddhist to seek refuge in India. Muslim Bangladeshis flee for economic and some suggest political reasons. The phenomena that is India allows for an Indian Minority leader to ignore the oppression of the Bangladeshi Hindu minority all the while supporting the rights of illegal Bangladeshi Muslim majority infiltration and land grabbing efforts. In a country with an 85% Hindu population ruled by a member of the Sikh minority, with an Italian born Christian leader of the ruling party, a Muslim VP and a lady President, the Indian Minority leadership ignored a Bangladesh that refuses to allow a Minority near the seat of power. Bangladesh has been repeatedly called into question for its lack of civil rights and for oppression of its Minority communities. By lumping in the oppressed minorities of Bangladesh with the aggressive and infiltrating majority group an attempt has been made to blur the line between victim and aggressor. Hindus of Bangladesh fleeing the repressive political climate, and often in fear of their lives, are clearly refugees. A majority of those crossing the border into India, however, are members of Bangladesh's Muslim majority community who cross into India for socio-economic and political reasons. The lumping in of the two groups is dishonest or at best ignorant. The media unquestionably legitimizes such views to the public.

CCCLXXXIII **We the People** October 2008

Recently an Indian Christian leader compared the penniless Vivekananda's 1892 Chicago speech to the conversion tactics of India's well financed modern Christians. *"So Vivekananda went to America to preach Hinduism so what is wrong if Christians preach the Bible in India?"* This Minority lobbyist intentionally distorted the historical facts in question. Vivekananda came to America penniless. He was invited to speak at a conference on World Religions. By publicly declaring this as equal to modern missionaries with slickly packaged agendas with hospitals and schools backed by the prestige of affluent and politically empowered National entities is more than just inaccurate. It is blatant propaganda unbecoming of a true disciple of Christ.

Another false premise presented by some Indian Christian leaders is the idea that conversion is a part of Indian culture. They claim that Buddha converted all of India to Buddhism. This view is met with credulity by most Indians. The entire Western concept of religion has been artificially forced upon the Indian model. It is a Western idea that Buddhism and Hinduism are two distinct religions. Within Hinduism alone there are significant differences between the various branches. Some of these differences are more prominent than those that allegedly separate Hinduism and Buddhism. History reveals that Hinduism and Buddhism were not inimical faiths that demanded rejection of the other. Both these faiths were contemporary to one another and are accurately described as alternate cultural accents of the same traditional milieu. The concept of the two traditions being separate religions was a Western invention. The very fact that Lord Buddha is recognized as the 9th Avatar of Lord Vishnu, who is accepted as God himself by a majority of Hindus, testifies to this. The Dashavatar or 10 Avatars of Vishnu represent a crucial and integral aspect of Hinduism. Unlike western religions, the total uprootment and abandonment of one's ancestral faith as an inimical force has never held a prominent place within the Indic religious context. Buddhist and Hindu culture complement one another. To compare the method and impact of the Christian missionaries upon India to the rise of Buddhism is to overthrow history. Christian and Muslim conversion involves the rejection and denial of ancestral faith. Similar changes within the Indic context are never so drastic and reflect the variations of choice within the Dharmic family.

Distortion of the facts and manipulation of events is the standby procedure. Accusations against the Hindus are made yet no evidence is given. The media parrots the accusations as fact adding to the image desired. As the case becomes

clear the facts come in. The rumor is separated from the fact. The Hindus were innocent yet the truth is never reported. The fabrication becomes the accepted record. To this day various Christian leaders will speak of rapes of nuns that were long ago proven to be baseless. In a ploy designed to create the image of an oppressed Christianity, suffering Christ-like upon the cross of woe, the truth is rejected. Desperately clinging to their roles, the Christian leadership empowered by a complicit media pad their resumes with disinformation and misinformation.

In a glaring instance of such, the Christian and the mainstream media have been promoting a report by the Communist Party of India. In this report, based solely upon the views, conjectures and political biases of the Communists, claims that over 500 Christians died in the aftermath of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati's murder are made. Putting this into a historical context allows us to recognize the contradiction and obvious collusion at work. Christianity and Communism have long been at odds. The application of known anti-Christian Communist based propaganda to promote Christian concerns would be unthinkable in most settings. Yet suddenly Christians are relying upon hostile news sources and accepting them as valid. The two ideologies have been locked in battle for a over a hundred years. Conveniently they are now carrying the water for each other. The Communists have suddenly become concerned activists speaking out regarding the plight of the Christians. The Christians have synchronized their message with the Communists. India's media provides the platform for this unnatural nexus and the truth is distorted to fit their agenda. The answer to this riddle lies within the conspiracy aimed at the destruction of India's Hindu based indigenous social activists.

In early September 2008 Human Rights activists descended upon Orissa in the name of the suffering minorities. In September 2008 I met with one such activist out of Washington DC in Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa. She directly laid the blame for all the trouble upon the RSS. *"It's unbelievable what the RSS is doing in Kandhamal."* I asked her to clarify. *"It's really true. I am on this internet forum and I get a lot of reports from Hindu Brahmins that cannot stand the RSS. There are so many news articles revealing what's happening there as well. It's just terrible."* I clarified, *"So you haven't been Kandhamal but you get reports from reliable sources like Brahmins that are anti-RSS and news reports that 'expose' the activities of the RSS."* She replied, *"Yes. I will send you some links."* Here we see a classic case of the '*Human Rights Industry*' at work. The group is

fed information from biased interest groups and a verifiably hostile media and then produces a report based on these questionable sources. The report is then reported upon as '*News*' and then parroted by the same anti-RSS crowd as evidence verifying their initial accusations. In a kind of information racket, human rights groups provide the validation for unverified allegations. These are thus verified by the human rights groups who depend upon unverifiable accusations that are at the basis of their reports. The media ran riot attributing every hint of a crime against the Christian community as part of a vast right wing Hindu conspiracy. A mischievous report from a foreign news agency declared that an American doctor took shelter in a Baptist Church after coming under attack by Hindu fanatics. It turned out to be an absolutely baseless report. The American doctor publicly denied that any such incident took place.

The larger question is what criminal mind is behind the invention of such stories? What sinister process is at work which allows the media to publish without verification of the facts? One way or another the goal of vilifying and tarnishing the image of the Hindu traditionalists is pursued without restraint. The media is clearly being used as a weapon against the RSS and affiliated Hindu organizations. Rather than being the 4th estate of civil society, India's media is more like a bludgeon. It decides what is relevant to its pre-scripted scenarios and cherry picks information to fit into its preordained scripts. This propaganda is then disseminated and imposed upon the public and the designed perceptions popularized as fact. India's media has long abandoned its responsibility as a medium for information, events and facts. In a manipulative process, the Press trivializes the profound and sensationalizes the profane.

On a recent research visit to Govardhan in Uttar Pradesh, India on the last day of the Hindu holy month of Kartik, a full moon was in the sky. Thousands upon thousands of pilgrims were circumambulating the sacred Govardhan hill. In an endless march beginning from the predawn hours until late evening, thousands of Hindu pilgrims circled the mount. In a massive display of the living and ancient Indian culture, people of all ages, including entire families walked bedecked in colorful clothes. The excitement was tangible. Such a massive event inspired no mention in the media. For the media it was a non event. Coming from the same media that highlights every minor gathering of Leftist politicians and religious minority groups, such bias

by the media is intentional. By constantly disenfranchising the Hindus, distorting their words and denigrating their efforts, the media is the primary cause of social chaos and political mayhem. The same media that projects itself as a voice of concern provides the rationale for oppression.

In America this same method was applied against the great American Indian leaders of the 1800s who struggled to defend their culture, people and lands. In every case without fail it was the media which provided the sensational and gruesome tales of massacres of *'innocent white women and children at the hands of the Red Savages'*. The media-induced frenzy and uproar that followed led to organized lynch mobs and groups of US soldiers bent on murder. American Indian tribes were ruthlessly massacred, ethnically cleansed and imprisoned by the thousands. As the brutal aggression continued, the media provided the rationale within a context of law and order. By completely ignoring the injustices, the brutal acts of violence, rapes, murders and loss of land and water rights that instigated the trouble, the media distorted the historical underpinnings involved. With a focus on the effect and denial of the cause, the media becomes a powerful tool and weapon against a targeted group. Guns alone do not create genocide.

This conclusion was reached by the *United Nations International Criminal Tribunal*. In reference to the media's complicity in violence the Tribunal declared, *"Without a firearm, machete or any physical weapon you, (Nahimana founder of Rwanda's RTLM, Radio TV des Milles Collines) caused the death of thousands of innocent civilians."* The media case as it was known, was conducted by the UNICTR or the *'United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda'* and presided over by Judge Navanetham Pillay. The historic ruling clearly delineated the responsibilities and consequential role of the media. *"The power of the media to create and destroy fundamental human values comes with great responsibility. Those who control such media are accountable for its consequences."* [CCCLXXXIV]

This important precedent setting landmark case has been virtually forgotten and suppressed. For some in India, the media is the weapon of choice. The implications of the *Media Case* are far reaching and significant. Such a legal mechanism based upon the landmark Rwanda *Media Case* would no doubt be of great benefit to the

[CCCLXXXIV] **UN Integrated Regional Information Networks** *'UN Tribunal Convicts Media Leaders of Genocide'* December 3, 2003

Indian authorities, law professionals and overall socio-political climate. Freedom of the Press does not refer to the freedom to oppress. In the landmark case, the UN convicted three Rwandan media personalities for *'genocide, incitement to genocide, conspiracy and crimes against humanity-extermination and persecution.'* The verdict is clear and the precedent set. The Indian media has been clearly and repeatedly implicated as a cause of violence and mayhem. It is widely recognized for its ruthless and biased approach towards news reporting. The Indian media has been implicitly involved in stirring up tension and fear amongst the people in a manner nearly identical to the UN *Media Case*. India would do well to challenge its media to create rather than destroy fundamental human values. The Indian media should be held to account for the consequences of its actions.

In a rare display of honesty and candid self assessment, Shakkar Gupta, Editor of the *New Indian Express*, a widely read and secular publication, confessed, *"On facts, therefore, it would seem that we in the English language media have something to answer for…surely, we in the media have much to answer for…Now it precisely such irreverence for the vital difference between 'something' and 'much' that often exhibits itself in a lot of our newspaper copy and misleads millions of our readers…In this country, secularism in practice meant romancing the minority and demonizing the majority."*[ccclxxxv]

Again referring to the recent Smithsonian expose on the British-American conspiracy against Iran's post WW II democracy; as their machinations against Iran's popularly elected leader began, the media initiated the campaign, declaring the Mossadegh administration as one of dangerous '*Iranian nationalism and Islamic fanaticism'*. The parallel with the modern day media's campaign against the BJP is striking.

"In 1951, Iran's parliament chose as prime minister one of the most highly educated men in the country…Mohammed Mossadegh, championed what had become the nation's transcendent goal: nationalization of the oil industry. Even before taking office, he proposed a nationalization law that both houses of parliament passed unanimously. The British, to no one's surprise, refused to accept it. They withdrew their oil technicians, blockade the port from which oil was exported and asked the United Nations to order Iran to withdraw the plan. Mossadegh's popularity at home skyrocketed; as a British diplomat wrote in a report from Tehran, he had done 'something which is always dear to Persian hearts; he flouted the authority of a great power and a great foreign

[ccclxxxv] **India Today** December 30, 2002

interest.' In October Mossadegh travelled to New York City to plead his case at the United Nations. It was the first time the leader of a poor country had mounted this august stage to challenge a great power so directly. "My countrymen lack the bare necessities of existence; their standard of living is probably one of the lowest in the world. Our greatest national resource is oil. This should be the source of work and food for the population of Iran. Its exploitation should properly be our national industry, and the revenue from it should go to improve our conditions of life." Most American newspapers, however, were unsympathetic to Mossadegh's plea on the grounds that he was defying international law and threatening the flow of oil to the free world. The New York Times, for instance, decried Iran as a 'defiant scorner' of the United Nations, and further blamed 'Iranian nationalism and Islamic fanaticism' for carrying the dispute 'beyond the field of legality and common sense.'[CCCLXXXVI]

This demonization of a people is the initial fallback response used to criminalize the identity of a people. Once the negativity of the targeted group has been established, any forthcoming acts of violence or injustice against the group are than rationalized as a necessary evil.

By discrediting of those Hindus clinging to their traditions and culture, the media has created a rationale for prejudice. It has declaimed that any basic commitment to the Hindu outlook is an automatic disqualifier. This view demands that such individuals or groups be exorcized from the socio-political framework of Indian polity.

In a book written over 150 years ago a Mr. Mullins is quoted. Glorifying the ongoing Christian efforts to strip Indians of their cultural identity, the author describes a scenario that is identical to the agenda of today's Leftist Secular extremists.

> *"Temples are being allowed, to a great extent, to fall into decay, while the number of new ones erected is by no means large. In those parts where missions have been carried on most extensively, a considerable falling off in the attendance at the great festivals is distinctly observable. The swinging festival, for instance, in Lower Bengal is very different from what it used to be. The number of idols sold at festivals is greatly diminished, and the offerings at the great temples are of far less value than they once were. A great change has taken place in the views and in the spirit of the people at large. Formerly they knew nothing of what true religion really is; but they have been enlightened on the nature of moral obligation, the duty of love of God, of love to men, and the nature and evil of sin. Missions have gone far, during*

CCCLXXXVI **Smithsonian** *'Inside Iran's Fury'* October 2008

the last fifty years, in developing a conscience amongst the natives, in whom it was in a deadly sleep. Is not this alone a great result? The Hindoos, too, have begun to lay aside some of their old notions. The Brahmins are no longer so highly honored; the clever Sudras thrust them aside from place and power without scruple; by far the greater increase of wealth and wisdom has been diffused among the latter…A numerous body is coming forward in society possessing far more enlightened notions than their fathers did; a body of men, who put little faith in the Shastras, and look upon the old pundits and teachers as ignorant bigots."[CCCLXXXVII]

Today the agenda remains the same; only the actors have changed.

Raping the Truth

Truth is the first casualty and the first victim in war. Rarely do two sincere parties find themselves in conflict. It is when truth is denied or ignored that frustration develops. Frustration leads to outrage, outrage leads to loss of intelligence. Loss of intelligence or thoughtfulness opens the door to brutal acts violence. Brutality comes in many forms. Amongst these rape is perhaps one of most vicious. The powerless condition of the victim invokes instant sympathy. The bestial act of rape is an automatic headline. The accused are generally convicted by the media and the public long before any court of law weighs in on the matter. In such an environment, the charge of rape implies automatic guilt upon the accused. The media parrots the words of the accuser ignoring that an accused is just that; a focus of accusation, plain and simple. Journalists are generally in no position to decide the facts of the matter. At times, the Indian media will report upon incidents within hours of their occurrence with full blow by blow reports condemning the BJP. It is as if the media had engaged supernatural detectives with improbable capabilities. At times one can wonder if investigation and detective work was the sole domain of the media regardless of the police. If the media can truly and accurately deduce '*the who and the why*' of an event without forensic research and investigation, what need is there for police and detective work? In truth the media can be relied on for '*the where and when*' of an event. Beyond that, the 'who and why' require intensive research efforts.

[CCCLXXXVII] **The administration of the East India company; a history of Indian progress,** 'Mr Mullins' Sir John William Kaye 1853

Yet when it comes to rape accusations, specifically in connection to Hindu groups, the media and politicized minority lobby and Congress Party suddenly assumes the role of judge, jury and advocate for the accuser. The bias is obvious, extreme and blatantly prejudice. This is compounded by the manipulative use of media that intentionally misrepresents the details. The media's repeated refusals to correct, retract or explain the true circumstances, once revealed, prove the hostility of the Press.

The Jhabua Rape Case is quite revealing in this regard. The media screamed to the world lurid details regarding the rape of a Christian Nun by 24 Hindu thugs. Talking heads filled the airwaves and news columns, as media reports drove the frenzy into an image of violent and vulgar Hindus across the globe. However the facts revealed that the rapists were mostly Christian converts. The entire incident was about criminal behavior and had nothing to do with religious persecution. Unfortunately for the truth and India's image, the facts were not the issue. It was the spin that mattered. The details of the case were not published. An entire detailed list of the actual rapists' names, caste and religion were provided to the media by the Press information bureau. No news outlet of the National or the International Press published these clarifications despite the intense campaign blaming the Sangh Parivar. [CCCLXXXVIII]

The maxim '*a lie travels around the world before the truth gets its shoes on*' was validated. The media maintained its hold on the Jhabua Rape incident as an example of Hindu aggression and continued to apply its own lie as a journalistic tool. Then when another incident took place in Jhajjar in Haryana, the media labeled it as a '*Jhabua repeated in Jhajjar*.' Within two days the facts came out. Jhabua indeed had been repeated in Jhajjar. The disinformation campaign of the media had once again reared its ugly head. A kind of rape had taken place, the rape of the truth by the media. In 1999, Orissa's reputation and the image of the Hindus was once again tarnished. In a report that has the markers of an International campaign of defamation, the media blared out the news *'Orissa Nun Raped in Moving Car.'* Claiming that Jacqueline Mary was raped by men dressed in saris, a Pastor had been quoted as the source of the story. A major Indian paper published a six column length headline, *'Christian Nun raped in a Moving car in Baripada, Orissa.'* Intensive police investigations into the matter revealed that the entire incident had been fabricated. The 'good' pastor had lied. The '*helpless*' nun had sinned against her God. And by bearing false witness, the law had been broken. The media had abused the

[CCCLXXXVIII] **Dialogue** Dinanath Mishra Volume 7 Number 5 October-December 2005

confidence of the people and added fuel to the raging fire of communal and social disharmony. Justice Wadhwa, who had been appointed by the Secular Governmental authorities to investigate the violence in Orissa, wrote, *"It was a madeup story. Investigations found that there was in fact no rape of Sister Mary…B.B. Panda Director General of the Police stated that the rape of the nun case was projected and highlighted all over the world and was also projected as an attack on Christians when in fact it was not true and the case turned out to be false."*

Going back to the Jhajjar, Madhya Pradesh case we find that the incident was political in nature. Two Nuns had incurred the wrath of the local villagers for '*meddling*' in a local committee election. The villagers had organized public protests against them for using their religious influence in political affairs. Church spokespeople cynically presented the protests as a similar incident to the Jhabua gangrape case. The media latched onto the Church's insinuations of rape and trumpeted the allegations throughout the world. In a rare case of responsible journalism, the Editor of the *Observor*, Balbir K Punj sent a team to discover the facts of the case. The facts were not only discovered but presented in an accurate manner. This case is an excellent example of the positive potential and ability of the media. By functioning within the guidelines of responsible journalism the media can be a great asset to the well being of society.

Going back to the alleged rape of Sister Jaqueline Mary said to have taken place on February 3, 1999 we see the exact opposite approach. Media was used to stir up tension and cause outrage. Once again accepting a Pastor and Nuns claims as unadulterated facts, the media featured headlines such as *'Orissa's 2nd Stain: Nun Raped'* Indian Express. *'Nun Gangraped by Men in Saris in Orissa'* Telegraph. *'Nun Raped in Moving Car'*. Dramatic statements such as *'village has become a rallying point for the Christians,'* were made. Declarations of pogroms, conspiracies and religious extremism were bandied about. *'A communal conspiracy is suspected to be behind the rape.'* The media quoted the allegedly informed perspective of Christian school teachers as the basis of rape. In the echo chamber of the media and Left-Minority conclave a self-feeding mechanism of propaganda allows for the pontification of conclusive statements on events that never happened.

There is clearly an ongoing and sinister abuse of State, Media and Ecclesiastical credibility being used in a psychological warfare campaign against Hindus. In an almost comical manner an extensive artifice is developed. Conspiracies are alleged and

accepted as fact without the slightest regard for the facts. Ironically the very allegations of conspiracy require a functional conspiratorial mechanism to survive. Therefore we find that the only conspiracy involved is the conspiracy to denigrate the Hindus. That the jails of India are not filled with corrupt media people, government officials and Church leaders can only be explained by a near total breakdown of legal polity and a lack of will amongst law enforcement.

Without the slightest attempt at preliminary investigation and research into the facts the Indian media broadcasts the claims and accusations of Christian priests and nuns. The Police respond in like manner arresting the accused based solely upon the accusations made against them. In Kandhamal the situation has become so dire that the Kandhas have become a kind of political prisoners. In this sense India is stepping very close towards becoming a bureaucratic-based authoritarian dictatorship that uses the press and its minorities as tools and weapons of oppression.

The Christian leaders wield enormous clout within the Indian system and their views and claims are championed unquestionably by the Indian media. The views of India's Christian lobby carry great weight and credibility with India's opinion makers. Therefore it is fair to investigate the track record of Christians in other parts of the world. Are the priests and nuns worthy of such trust? Are they not as capable of foibles and faults as any other human being? Great harm has been done in the name of Christianity and the reputation of the religious tradition itself has been harmed. The representatives of the Church have lost their way. The so-called followers of Christ are revealed by the fruits they sprout. They are revealed by their bearing of false witness and repeated acts that bespeak of their seduction by money and power. These acts defame the Church and its teachings and obviously have nothing to do with Lord Jesus Christ.

As the recent Kandhamal Nun Rape allegations flooded the airwaves, the media forsook any attempt at neutrality. They howled when a Bajrang Dal leader accused the mysterious 29 year old alleged 'rape victim' of engaging in consensual sex. Without any prior investigation or any evidence authenticating the claims of the nun, this view was just as valid as any other theory in this regard. Yet the media harshly condemned the Bajrang Dal leader for daring to present an alternative scenario. The scenario presented by the Bajrang Dal fits into the overall track record of the modern Church. The idea of a sexual active nun is not so uncommon and is a known phenomenon. In the Kandhamal

Rape Case the forensic evidence did indeed state that the Nun was sexual active. That was proven. The rape aspect remained purely theoretical and its basis solely one-sided.

Sexuality within the Church is nothing new. Let us turn to the Vatican for more insight into this issue. Nuns and sexual activity are the makings of a scandal. Throughout history some nuns have indeed engaged in sexual activity. The catacombs of Rome and the heart break represented by the skeletons of abandoned newborns there within, testifies to this. Yet we need not go so far back in history. A recent report alleges that some Catholic clergy exploit their financial and spiritual authority to gain sexual favors from religious women, many of whom in developing countries, are culturally conditioned to be subservient to men. The reports obtained by the NCR or *National Catholic Reporter* state that Priests at times demand sex in exchange for favors, such as permission or certification to work in a given diocese. Young nuns are seen as safe targets of sexual activity. In a few extreme cases, according to documents priests have impregnated nuns and encouraged them to have abortions.

The Catholic publication, the *National Catholic Reporter* revealed, *"Several reports written by senior members of Women's religious orders and by an American Priest assert that sexual abuse of nuns by priests, including rape, is a serious problem, especially in Africa and other parts of the developing world…Medical Missionary of Mary Sister Maura O'Donahue, prepared a physician's report in the hope of promoting change. She wrote in her report that she had prepared it 'after much profound reflection and with a deep sense of urgency since the subjects involved touch the very core of the Church's mission and ministry. The information on abuse of nuns by priests comes from missionaries (men and women) from priests, doctors and other members of our loyal ecclesial family. I have been assured that case records exist for several incidents described in the report and that information is not just based on hearsay."*[CCCLXXXIX]

The report focuses on 23 countries spanning the globe including the USA, Ireland, Brazil, South Africa and India. These are not isolated cases of wayward Christians. This is a pandemic. In fact the priest's sexual abuse of children has become so well known that it has unfortunately become a part of the Western cultural lexicon. It is a stigma inseparable from the popular image associated with the priesthood. It is unjust but it is a reality. To the average Westerner the statements of a priest or nun do not carry much weight, anymore than that of any other citizen. The Indian context, however, artificially

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CCCLXXXIX **National Catholic Reporter** John Allen and Pamela Schaeffer March 16, 2008

elevates the testimony of the priests or nun to the level of proven fact. In reality, a majority of Indians do not believe it and see through the charade. It is the Western mimicry of the Indian elites who fancy themselves as progressives that eat this propaganda up. They add the media-speak to their vocabulary and act as the standard bearers of an '*informed*' elite habituated to the trivialization of the culture and traditions of the common people. The NCR continues with its revelations regarding the state of Christian morality. *"In a number of countries, Sisters are refusing to travel alone with a Priest in a car because of the fear of sexual harassment or even rape. Priests have also on occasion abused their position in their role as Pastors and spiritual directors and utilized their authority to gain sexual favors from the Sisters."* [cccxc]

The report cited by NCR exposes the depth of the crisis within the Church. *"In some instances candidates to religious life had to provide sexual favors to priests in order to acquire the necessary certificates and or recommendations to work in a diocese. Another diocese had to dismiss over 20 sisters because of pregnancy, again in many cases by priests. Some Catholic medical professionals employed in Catholic hospitals have reported pressure being exhorted on them by priests to procure abortions in those hospitals for religious sisters. O'Donohue wrote that she at first reacted with 'shock and disbelief' at the 'magnitude' of the problem she was encountering through her contacts with' a great number of sisters during the course of my visits' in a number of countries. Robert J. Vitillo, a Catholic Priest of the Patterson, New Jersey, USA diocese and Executive director of the US Bishops' Campaign for Human Development stated, 'As a result of the wide spread fear of AIDS, many men (and some women) have turned to the young (therefore presumably uninfected) girls (and boys) for sexual favors. Religious women have also been targeted by such men, and especially by clergy who may have previously frequented prostitutes. I myself have heard tragic stories of religious women who were forced to have sex with the local priests or with a spiritual counselor who insisted that this activity was 'good' for the both of them. Frequently attempts to raise these issues with local and International Church authorities have met with deaf ears. In North America and in some parts of Europe, our Church is already reeling under the pedophilia scandals. How long will it take for this same institutional Church to become sensitive to these new abuse issues which are resulting from the pandemic?*[cccxci]

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cccxc **National Catholic Reporter** John Allen and Pamela Schaeffer March 16, 2008
cccxci **Ibid.**

Two instances from the O'Donohue report are worthy of quoting. *"In a number of countries, members of Parish councils and small Christian communities are challenging their pastors because of their relationships with women and young girls. Some of these women are wives of the parishioners. In such cases the husbands are angry about what is happening but are embarrassed to challenge their parish priests…In one country visited, I was informed that the Presbytery in a particular Parish was attacked by parishioners armed with guns because they were angry with the priests because of their abuse of power and betrayal of trust which their actions and lifestyles reflected."* If this had happened in India we could practically guarantee that the armed attackers would be portrayed as VHP or Bajrang Dal radicals and the priests as '*walking on water*' saintly angelic beings representing a rare combination of Jesus himself and Mahatma Gandhi.

In a heart wrenching tale of betrayal O'Donohue reported, *"In another country a recent convert from Islam (1 of 2 daughters who became Christians) was accepted as a candidate to a local religious congregation. When she went to her parish priest for the required certificates, she was subjected to rape by the priest before being given the certificates. Having been disowned by her family because of her conversion to Christianity, she did not feel free to return home. She joined the congregation and soon afterwards found she was pregnant. To her mind, the only option for her was to leave the congregation, without giving the reason. She spent 10 days roaming the forests, agonizing over what to do. Then she decided to go and talk to the Bishop, who called in the priest. The priest accepted the accusation as true and was told by the Bishop to go on a 2 week retreat."*[CCCXCII]

In this regard, the Vatican stated, *"The problem is known about and is restricted to a certain geographical area. The Holy See is dealing with the issue in collaboration with Bishops, the Union of Superiors General (grouping of heads of male religious orders) and the International Union of Superiors General (heads of female religious orders)."*[CCCXCIII] Some of the geographical areas referred to in this statement are USA, Brazil, Italy, Phillipines and India.

In a 1995 *'personal memo'* to Rome, Sister Maura O'Donohue, a medical missionary of Mary cited *"…a Priest who had brought a Sister for an abortion. She died during the procedure and the priest officiated at the requiem mass."* Previously in a 1994 *'strictly confidential'* report, Sister O'Donohue described the exploitation of sisters and other women by

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[CCCXCII] **National Catholic Reporter** John Allen and Pamela Schaeffer March 16, 2008
[CCCXCIII] **Vatican Holy See** Official Statement

priests. *"It is important to stress that what is presented here is not about generalized behavior but occurs time and time again in a familiar pattern…several priests and indeed members of the hierarchy were reported to have abused their power and betrayed their trust in exploitive sexual relationships with sisters. The cases sited only represent a mere 6 years. The incidents are widespread and span the entire globe."*

The layers of inhumanity, dishonesty and hypocrisy revealed by this report are a wakeup call to many sincere Catholics. Unfortunately the deeprooted human frailties and dysfunction of the Church have yet to be resolved. This is very evident by the recent shocking exposes regarding the Indian Church. In late October 2008, Pope Benedict XVI suspended the Kochi Bishop John Thattunkal for *'adopting'* a 26 year old woman and for engaging in *'black magic'*. It was the first time in the history of the Indian Catholic Church that a Bishop had been suspended from his responsibilities of the Church. [cccxciv]

It almost goes without saying that the Indian media allegedly fond purveyors of scurrilous reports and scandals barely mentioned this scandalous event. The implications involving the Pope's dismissal of a leading Indian Bishop for the first time in the history of the Indian Church were considered unworthy of discussion or concern. Following a week after the *'India's First Woman Saint'* slap in the face of India's non-Christian population, the significance of India's *'First Sacked Bishop'* should have been obvious. The agenda is obvious to any cognizant observer. By artificially hyping a romanticized view of Christians and constantly denigrating Hindu leaders and beliefs, Christian hypocrisy is ignored and Hindu acts of integrity are dismissed as irrelevant or dangerous. Perfunctory reports do appear in the news at times that do not fit into the tortured logic of the media elites. However it is the spin which elevates or subsumes a story. An event of a few hundred Communists is generally given prominent coverage whereas a gathering of thousands of Hindus is ignored or misrepresented. Through this process actual assaults upon the morale and moral fabric of society are allowed to fester and go unchecked. Whereas the activities of the RSS, such as Shakas are time and again twisted into severe threats to the '*secular fabric'* of India.

Yet another shocking episode surfaced in October 2008 revealing the crisis within the Indian Church. *'Revelations put Nun's life in danger' "Abortions performed on Nuns having*

[cccxciv] **Express News Service** October 24, 2008

limitless affairs with priests. Her sharp criticisms about the abortions carried out on some sisters and her questioning about the limitless affairs between sisters and priests made the Church authorities violent. A Nun's life is under threat following her revelations about alleged abortions performed on Nuns of the Congregation of Daughters of Mary convent in Anchal. Following a complaint by the nephew of this nun, the State Women's' Commission member P.K. Sainaba met the Nun. The complaint makes a very serious charge that one of the Nuns of the Congregation, Sister Serena Jacob, had committed suicide unable to bear the trauma. Now the State's Women's' Commission has sought the urgent intervention of the Health and Home Ministers in the issue. In a report submitted to the Ministers, the Commission said, "and if things continue like this we fear that the life of the Nun is in danger. In her statement given to the Women's' Commission member, the Nun said, "My hands and legs were tied up and I was forcibly given anesthesia and then I was taken to the mental hospital. I am given 18 tablets a day now to weaken my mental capabilities. She narrated all that had happened in the convent and told the Women's' Commission member that she was ready to repeat all that s he said in the court. The Nun pleaded that she be rescued from the clutches of the Convent authorities."[cccxcv]

The claims of a nun in Orissa created a global outcry from the media, human rights groups, Congress Party, the Communists and minority pressure groups. Yet the claims of a persecuted and fearful nun in Anchal are ignored and treated as irrelevant. Where are the marketers of misery in this regard? Why the silence in regards to the pleas of this 60 year old nun? Why do the words of a 29 year old nun in Orissa carry such potency to mobilize the legions of outraged guardians of *'secularism'*?

To put it simply, the rape of Nuns means little to them. If humanitarian concern were truly the basis of their outrage, both nuns would be championed by them. The words of both nuns should be enough for their 'chivalrous call to arms' on behalf of violated innocence. The echo chamber of media elites, minority shrills and pseudo-progressives would resound with pontificating calls against these oppressions and violations of human rights. However because the alleged rape of the nun fits into their agenda. They shamelessly use her accusations as a tool and a weapon against their political enemies as they selectively ignore the plight of another nun. Obviously rape is not an issue unless it can be transformed into a political bludgeon.

[cccxcv] **Express News Service** 'Revelations put Nun's life in Danger' October 17, 2008

Empowered and popular Hindu based movements are blossoming throughout India. It is in direct contradiction to efforts of those dedicated to the trivialization and outright rejection of India's indigenous traditions and native genius. If a nun's suffering cannot be twisted into an attack on the Hindu activists, it is meaningless and of no human value. Therefore the tormented, imprisoned and fearful pleas of the Anchal nun are of no concern. The violation of her human rights and freedom and calls to an end to the iniquities festering in the Christian Church inspire no sympathetic eulogies in the Press. No champions amongst the Congress Party, Communists, the self styled '*Secular Progressive'* combine, Christian activists have responded to her plight. This is undeniable proof. The suffering of a nun has nothing to do with the media outcry regarding the alleged Kandhamal rape. Rather than being shields in defense they act as the swords and spears of attack upon the body politic of India.

The Indian Church has been implicated in horrific incidents yet this undercurrent is often ignored and mostly forgotten. The Church's handling of these various untoward incidents speaks towards the reliability and credibility of its leadership. A man connected with law enforcement, familiar with the crimes of some within the Indian Church, spoke on condition of anonymity. His statements are consistent with the track record of the overall condition of the Church both in India and abroad.

"In 1998, in Kozhikode, Kerala Sister Jyothis of Sacred Heart Convent at Mukkom was murdered and thrown down the convent's well. The Church and Christian police officers stymied the investigation and no headway was made in solving the crime. Sister Jyothi's father, K.M. Jose filed a case in the high court pleading for a CBI investigation into his daughter's murder. In another incident, a Christian Priest named Geo Pulicka, Principal of the Catholic Nirmalagiri College at Koothuparamba in North Kerala was attacked by the students. Two of the students had been sodomized in the college hostel by two of the Christian priests teaching at the school. Students put up posters of the priests and nuns engaging in sexual acts. These were plastered throughout the campus. Nirmalagiri was closed for sometime after this. It was later reopened after the Church and State Government mediated an agreement between them. The unspoken and ignored reality is that an increasing number of Priests are being implicated in sex crimes. In a 1995 case, Father Cyriac Kerthikapally, a parish priest of Kurumbandham church in the Changamacheery archdiocese lured a 15 year old schoolgirl to his bedroom. For the next 2 years the Priest had frequent and regular sex with the underage girl. On September 15, 1998 she gave birth to a female child. This led to the discovery of the criminal behavior of the Priest. The Police

registered a case against the Priest for raping, abducting and compelling the victim to attempt an abortion. The Police charged him under sections 315, 316 and 336 of the Indian Penal code. Rape and murder are tragically common in the Christian Churches of Kerala, India. Currently there are about 63 cases involving Priests in progress within the State. Back in 1993 the dead body of Sister Abhaya was recovered from the well of the St Pious X convent in Kottayam, Kerala. It is run by the influential Knanaya Catholics of the region. It is alleged that Abhaya had been raped and then killed. Corruption in the Police force led to 6 years of Police investigations that went nowhere. The rape evidence was tampered within the Government laboratory. CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) got in on the investigation. The narco analysis CDs submitted by the lab to the CBI were doctored after being in CBI custody. These were submitted to the High Court. The High Court has pulled up the CBI on this issue. In my opinion this coverup reaches to the very top echelons of power. To be clear I believe that Sonia Gandhi interfered in this investigation on behalf of the Church. That's my suspicion. It appears that Sister Abhaya had been raped and killed because she discovered some of the other nuns were having sex with two of the priests. The names of these priests in question are Jose Poothrukka and Thomas M. Kattur. A Malayam paper published a photo of one of the suspect priests. In response the Kerala Bishops attacked the freedom of the press and denounced the daily for publishing the picture. A Malayam movie has been made on this case titled 'Crime File'." [CCCXCVI]

On November 19, 2008 the police announced the arrest of 2 priests and a nun connected to the Abhay murder case. It was only after multiple CBI teams had failed to develop a case that a 5th team successfully brought charges in the case, a full 16 years later. (Some reports suggest this was the 7th CBI team to investigate the case). Investigative documents had been manipulated. One glaring example of this was the later addition of the word *'not'* in a sentence verifying sexual assault. The testimony of a new witness Sanjay P. Matthew is believed to have given investigators the clues leading to the arrests. As a neighbor of the convent, he had verified the presence of the 2 priests during the night of the murder, March 26, 1993.

This case fits the pattern of the '*pandemic'* of sexual aggression and promiscuity admitted to by the Vatican. The media's alleged concern for the safety and wellbeing of minorities lays exposed as a lie. Its focus on unproven accusations based upon the unreliable testimony of vested interests, at the expense of justice, makes the media a complicit partner in crimes against humanity. Proven incidents of inhumane brutality

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[CCCXCVI] **Author Interview with Anonymous Police Source** Bangalore, Karnataka October 14, 2008

against members of the same Christian minority it champions are swept under the rug. This is solely because Hindus cannot be targeted as the aggressors. Obviously the media and its fellow travelers have little concern for the plight of the Christians and minorities. It is the abuse of minority issues in the cause of power, politics and money that is the key motivator involved. The *'shameful'* suffering of nuns is cynically used as a type of psychological warfare against Hindu groups in particular and India and in general. The rape of a nun is shameful only when it can be used to demonize Hindus. If the same suffering of a member of the same group has no applicable role in the overall anti-Hindu agenda it is treated as an inconsequential incident.

It is not rape and the subsequent murders alone that plague the Christian church. While the Indian media frequently portrays priests and their actions and words as beyond question, history reveals a different picture. *'Cardinal reveals that knife wielding priest cut John Paul II in 1982'. "On May 12, 1982 a crazed ultra-conservative priest Juan Fernandez Krohn lunged at the Pope with a dagger and was knocked to the ground by Police and arrested. The fact that the knife actually reached the Pope and cut him was not known until now. 'I can now reveal that the Holy Father was wounded. When we got back to the room (in the Fatima Sanctuary complex) there was blood. Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz says in the documentary 'Testimony'. The crazed Priest Krohn was arrested and spent several years in a Portuguese prison before being expelled from the country."*[CCCXCVII]

A recent report entitled '*Internal Financial Controls in the U.S. Catholic Church*' highlights the reality that Christians and Churches are just as susceptible to fraud and other questionable activities. *"Revelations of embezzlements in not-for-profit entities are routinely reported in the media. Occasionally, those embezzlements occur at the highest levels of the organization. For example, the Orthodox Church of America recently fired its chancellor and began an audit. The chancellor is at the center of allegations brought by the former church treasurer of missing money, diverted cash, and un-audited accounts totaling millions of dollars (Washington Post, March 18, 2006). A pastor in the Bridgeport, Connecticut Catholic diocese was investigated on charges that he misspent $1.4 million of parish donations (Boston Globe, July 28, 2006). Four purchasing agents for the archdiocese of New York allegedly extorted over two million dollars in a kickback scheme over eight years from various food vendors to maintain lavish lifestyles. The church lost over one million dollars by having to pay higher prices for the food being purchased for schools and parishes (States News Service, January 5, 2006). There have been a number of studies that have documented the importance of and the general inadequacy of internal financial controls in churches (Chester, et*

[CCCXCVII] **Reuters News Service** October 15, 2008

al, 1999; Duncan, et al, 1999; Edwards, 1990; Flesher and Duncan, 1999; Harper and Harper, 1988; Jordan, et al 1991; McEldowney, et al, 1993; Smith and Miller, 1989; and Stock, 1995). Others have focused on the relationship between the spiritual aspects of a church and its accounting practices (Abdul-Rahman and Goddard, 1998; Booth, 1993; and Loughlin, 1998)"[CCCXCVIII]

In late October 2008, the Indian police arrested a Christian leader for attacking an inquiry committee. *"Evangelist and Praja Santhi party leader KA Paul, along with two supporters, were arrested when they were ``trying to attack'' members of an inquiry committee appointed by the revenue divisional officer to ascertain the ownership of a missionary building at Srikanya Theatre here today following a dispute between Paul and his brother David Raju, president of The Ancient Pentecost Church here. The building was bought by a group of 18 members in 1991 to organize missionary activities and handed over to Paul in 2001 for his religious activities. Paul used to conduct his personal activities, press conferences, etc there. He launched a political party last year and has been carrying out the party activities from the building. Late last night, Paul's brother, K David Raju, occupied the building. Raju told the media that Paul was planning to sell the building and he occupied it to protect the property.'' On learning of the development, Paul rushed here from Medak district and asked his brother to vacate the building immediately or face severe action. This threat triggered a clash between the followers of the two brothers. Meanwhile, an inquiry committee, headed by local MRO Swamy, was appointed under section 145 act to look into the claims of the two disputing parties. While the MRO was ascertaining facts from Raju, an enraged Paul, accompanied by his followers, tried to disturb the committee's inquiry by knocking the doors of the building and trying to attack them, it was alleged. Before the situation could turn ugly, personnel of the IV-Town police intervened and took Paul and two of his supporters into preventive custody. Earlier, speaking to reporters here today, Paul accused Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy of being behind the episode."*[CCCXCIX]

Whether it is the sexual temptation of feminine allurements represented by the nuns and novices or the aggressive violence against the authority and leadership of the ultimate living representative of Jesus Christ himself, Christian priests are just as capable and culpable of failure as any other human being. It is thus no surprise that priests and nuns have succumbed to their passions and lusts. Despite this reality the Indian media unquestioningly continues to broadcast the claims of the Church. The media publishes Christian accusations of rape and violence against the Hindus without a shred of evidence.

[CCCXCVIII] **Internal Financial Controls in the U.S. Catholic Church** Robert West Ph.D and Charles Zech Ph.D, Villanova University

[CCCXCIX] **Express News Service** *'KA Paul Arrested for bid to attack officials'* October 31, 2008

It is from this perspective and context that we can now accurately investigate the claims of rape leveled in the aftermath of the murder of Swami Lakshmananda. During the period beginning from late August until mid October 2008 two separate rape accusations were made against the Hindu activists and Kandhas. The first incident involved a Hindu girl named Rajani Majhi and the second case centered around the Kandhamal nun's allegations. A third rape case was also reported but it went virtually unnoticed. This was the gang rape of a Hindu woman by a group of Christians. The victim, being Hindu, stirred little local interest and registered absolutely zero concern amongst the National and International media.

The case of Rajani Majhi raises several important issues. In it we find all the ingredients of a crime drama. There are contradictory reports, media hype, a manipulative priest, rampaging mobs, clueless police and a multitude of suspects. According to the official version of events, on August 25th a tribal mob attacked a missionary-run orphanage. The enraged mob set fire to the orphanage and severely beat a police constable and a member of the Home Guard. Early media reports state that Rajani had been hiding in the building and succumbed to the fire. Initially the media claimed she was a Hindu orphan being sheltered by the Christian orphanage. However it was later revealed that Rajani was employed at the orphanage in order to finance her education at the Padampur Women's College. A Jesuit Priest, Father Edward Securia is said to have survived by hiding himself in the bathroom. Another report claimed he escaped by squeezing out the bathroom window. According to these early reports Rajani Majhi also hid herself but failed to escape and thus was burnt alive. However according to case # 81/2008 filed by Police Constable and Christian Pana Antaryami Pradhan an eyewitness testimony appeared in the media. *"…The mob hurled Rajani into a raging inferno after the latter entered into a heated argument with them."*[CD] A horrific incident by any measure.

A full month and 10 days later Father P.V. Peter suddenly held a press conference and announced to the world that Rajani had not only been burnt alive, but she had been first gangraped. Weaving a tale in direct contradiction of every eyewitness account, official statement and press report, Father Peter claimed that rather than hiding and escaping, the Jesuit Securia had been captured and beaten. *"On that fateful day, some miscreants banged at the door of the priest's room. At the time, Father Securia was taking rest in an ante-*

[CD] **Times of India** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa October 5, 2008

room, adjacent to the boy's hostel in the orphanage. As he opened the door, he was dragged to the court yard and beaten up."

In Pastor Peter's version, Rajani does not confront the mob as claimed by the eyewitnesses' official incident report. *"Finding him (Father Securia) in a critical state, Rajani and some children tried to escape from the orphanage to save their lives. Unfortunately, the attackers spotted her. Locking Father Securia in his room, they gangraped her and then burnt her alive. Father Securia could only hear the plaintive cries of Rajani, but could not save her. After that, the mob stayed there for 2 hours until she was completely burnt to death."*

Over 5 weeks had gone by before Father Peter presented a radically altered version of events it clearly contrasted with the statements of the eyewitness testimonials of both police and civilian victims of the violence. Pastor P.V. Peter stated in his press conference that, *"Then they took this girl to a side room and raped her before burning her alive…The attackers mistook her to be a Christian, raped her and then threw her into the fire."* Father Peter's peculiar version of events are wholly and startlingly at odds with every other account of the incident. It suggests a haughty confidence in the support of a complicit media, the Congress Party, global Christian organizations and other anti-BJP power centers. It is highly suspicious and indicative of a functioning conspiracy. The priest claims to have known all these '*facts*' within 2 days of the incident, besides allegedly sharing the information with various human rights groups, he had spoken of the incident to no one. When asked as to why he had kept mum over the gangrape for so long Peter maintained: *"I had narrated the incident to human rights activists who had come to me. As such Rajani is dead and so we didn't want to talk about it."*[CDI]

Perhaps, knowing that his account would not stand up to the rigors of examination, Peter never informed the police of his '*discoveries*'. Point by point, Peter's claims were discounted by the sworn testimony of the Jesuit Edourdo Securia and Christian Pana Police Constable Antaryami Pradhan. Peter says Father Securia was beaten then locked in his room. The testimony states he was not discovered by the mob, hid in a bathroom and eventually fled through the window. Peter claimed that Rajani Majhi accompanied by some children discovered the beaten priest in the compound and then tried to flee. The sworn testimony says she bravely confronted the mob and was pushed into the fire.

[CDI] **Times of India** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa October 5, 2008

Early reports however say she was burnt unknowingly by the mob that set the building on fire unaware she was hidden within.

Peter's charges present an image of a calculating mob bent on rape and murder that remained at the scene for over 2 hours. The image is one of malefic intent aimed at destroying any evidence of the rape. Yet the *Times of India* quotes the police as saying "*The incident happened within a short span of time and the assailants…left the venue hurriedly.*"[CDII] The victim's body was also recovered and its condition was suitable for a post-mortem investigation. "*Moreover, neither the post-mortem nor medical examination has found any evidence of rape.*" stated DIG Northwest Range Yogesh Bahadur Khurania.[CDIII]

Peter also accused the police of standing by as the rape and murder took place according to a report in *Merinews.com* yet *Times of India* revealed that the constable and home guard were beaten by the mob. As for the brutal gangrape? It clearly never took place. "*There is no evidence of rape. We have investigated into the case and even arrested twenty people. But nowhere has anyone or anything indicated any evidence of rape*." DIG Northwest Range Yogesh Bahadur Khurania told *Times of India*. Officer in Charge of Padampur Police Station A. Sandh also ruled out the possibility of rape and said, "*We have conducted a thorough investigation into the case and recorded all relevant versions. But nothing regarding rape has come to light.*" The police officer also said that a case (#81 of 2008) was registered on the very day of the incident and it was based upon a report submitted by Constable Anteryami Pradhan, an eyewitness. "*Neither the Constable nor Father Secuira in his statement recorded before a Magistrate have mentioned rape. We have testified eyewitnesses…sources said the post-mortem report did not say anything about rape and attributed the death to 'burning.'"*[CDIV]

According to *New Indian Express*, "*No complaint of rape has been made before police as of yet. We have registered a case for murder, rioting and arson. Twenty persons including the prime accused have already been arrested. Moreover, neither the post-mortem nor medical exam has found any evidence of rape*." DIG Y.B. Khurania told this paper.[CDV]

Pastor PV Peter's story quickly fell apart when Alphonce Toppo PRO of the Sanbalpur diocese (Peter's base) refuted the rape allegation. "*..The official spokesman of the*

[CDII] **Times of India,** October 5, 2008
[CDIII] **Indian Express,** October 5, 2008
[CDIV] **Times of India**, October 5, 2008
[CDV] **Indian Express**, October 5, 2008

Sambalpur diocese said the church had no knowledge that a 21 year old woman had been sexually assaulted before her killing…No such information has come to us", said Alphonce Toppo. *"…If Father PV Peter told some people that Rajani was gangraped then it's his view. We haven't come across any such complaint…*" he said, all but rebutting Peter's charge that the woman was sexually assaulted. Asked why were the church and police in disagreement with him Peter said, "*I have said what I have to. They might or might not agree.*" Alphonce Toppo in turn added, "*Peter has not officially informed the church about the gangrape*…' Bargarh SPAK Biswal pointed out that nobody had intimated the police about the gangrape. "*Why should we suppress any information? If we get evidence of rape, we will book the accused under rape charge*."[CDVI]

Quite a drastic change from the previous day's front page headlines '*Another Rape Singes Orissa'*. The church's denial of the story was buried the next day on page 18 beneath a full page wide headline proclaiming '*Saffron Mob Bays for Convert's Blood*.' In other words the Hindus are still vicious beasts. A full color picture of four forlorn Christian boys standing in front of a painting of sky blue wall with a Bible quote and two human size candles served to punctuate as to whose blood the saffron mob was after. Despite the collapse of Pastor Peter's horrific tale of bestial Hindu mobs brutal gangrape of a helpless Hindu girl, some Christian propagandists still refer to it as a fact.

Yet another alleged rape took place in the same district within a similar timeframe but the initial F.I.R. (first incident report) did not mention rape. The victim refused to cooperate with the investigation and, like Pastor PV Peter, she used the media and human rights groups to promote her story. The media the world over latched onto her claims as self-evident truth and her case became the '*shame*' of Orissa and India. Local news reports draw attention to the hypocrisy.

"Sahu criticized the remarks of the Prime Minister on the happenings in Orissa as a 'National Shame'. Sahu said that killing of an 84 year old unarmed saint along with a woman and three other disciples should have been condemned as a 'National Shame' in a country where saints have all along been worshipped as symbol of Godhead. Commenting on the alleged rape of the 'Nun' Shri Sahu said that any civilized society would condemn the alleged rape on any woman. But the 'nun' never claimed the alleged offence in her earliest version.
Moreover, she was staying with Fr. Thomas Chellan before the incident and went away to Kerala

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[CDVI] **Times of India**, '*We Can't Say Orphan Was Raped: Orissa Church*' October 6, 2008

with him soon after the incident. Unless she comes to the investigators and co-operates with the team it is difficult to substantiate such after thoughts. Such allegation had surfaced even earlier in Orissa in Baripada on February 4, 1999 and the investigations falsified the allegation of 'rape on the Nun', he added.[CDVII]

Of the three alleged rapes connected to the recent Kandhamal violence, one rape report barely made the news and was never reported on beyond Orissa. Despite having been registered with the police within hours of the crime and a culprit changed and arrested, it never made the news until three weeks later, even with the victim cooperating fully with the investigation as well. Even then it was ignored by most major publications. This was the gangrape of the Hindu Kandha girl of Tikabali.

It represents the only substantiated rape that did indeed take place in Orissa August 23 to October 23; a young Hindu woman was gangraped by five Christian men on the night of September 13, 2008.

"…a complaint of another gangrape victim has come as a shocker. This time a 22 year old Hindu woman in Tikabali has fallen victim to the heinous deeds of miscreants. The incident occurred on September 13th at Gadrangia village about 15 kilometers from Tikabali. The victim was waylaid by 5 persons when she had come out of her house at 9 PM. She was gagged and dragged to a nearby bushy area before being gangraped. Kandhamal S.P. Praveen Kumar said the woman lodged an FIR (First Incident Report) the next morning and named 5 persons. One of them Manoj Pradhan was arrested immediately." [CDVIII]

No mournful cries of outrage were heard from the human rights groups, women's groups, Congress Party, Communists and other self appointed Guardians of India's secular and civil society. As for the nun Meena who was allegedly gangraped by anywhere from one to fifty rampaging Hindus? Her story was broadcast the world over filling the airwaves, the e-media and print media. Government leaders, from the Prime Minister to Orissa Chief Minister, bowed their heads in shame as if God Himself had spoken through the voice of this modern Christian version of a traumatized and brutalized Draupadi. What sensible and good hearted person would not sympathize with her plight? What fair-minded citizen could not but look upon the rapists with disgust and cold fury?

CDVII **Odisha Today** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa October 6, 2008
CDVIII **New Indian Express** 'Another Rape Singes Orissa' October 5, 2008

The day after this story appeared, Bhuveneshwar Christian leader Anand Das, generally a calm gentleman, spoke of his repugnance as we walked together in the morning sun. *"This is so horrible. The BJP must not come back to power. Never again. Such beasts are a curse on India. I will do whatever I can to stop them from winning."* I was startled. I had met Anand Das through his close friend, the BJP Government Minister of Khadia textiles Sameer Mohanty. I asked Das, *"What of your BJP friend Sameer Mohanty?" Oh, he is a very good man. But his Political Party is not good.'* Anand Das affirmed.[CDIX]

Public perception had been manipulated. Fact and fiction had been blurred and all that was left was raw emotional response and conclusions based on such emotion. The alleged gangrape of a Christian un by Hindu mobs became the story. According to the nun and Father Chelan it all began on August 25th less than 24 hours after Swamiji and his students had been murdered. What follows is a statement by the alleged rape victim, Sister Meena.

"On 24th August, around 4.30 pm, hearing the shouting of a large crowd, at the gate of Divya Jyoti Pastoral Centre, I ran out through the back door and escaped to the forest along with others. We saw our house going up in flames. Around 8.30 p.m. we came out of the forest and went to the house of a Hindu gentle man who gave us shelter.

On 25th August, around 1.30 p.m., the mob entered the room where I was staying in Prahlad's house, one of them slapped me on my face, caught my hair and pulled me out of the house. Two of them were holding my neck to cut off my head. Others told them to take me out to the road, I saw Fr. Thomas Chellan also being taken out and being beaten. The mob consisting of 40-50 men was armed with lathis, axes, spades, crowbars, iron rods, sickles etc. They took both of us to the main road. Then they led us to the burnt down Jan Vikas building saying that they were going to throw us into the smoldering fire.

When we reached the Jan Vikas building, they threw us to the verandah on the way to the dining room, which was full of ashes and broken glass pieces. One of them tore my blouse and others my undergarments. Father Thomas Chellan protested but they beat him and pulled him out from there. They pulled out my saree and one of them stepped on my right hand and another on my left hand and then a third person raped me on the verandah mentioned above. When it was over,

CDIX **Author Interview with Anand Das** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa October 6, 2008

I managed to get up and put my petticoat and saree. The other young man whom I can identify caught me and took me to a room near the staircase. He opened his pants and was attempting to rape me when the crowd reached there. One man in the crowd told him not to do any further harm and so he left me. I will be able to identify the person who raped me and other three persons who stepped on my hands and tore my saree etc.

I hid myself under the staircase. The crowd was shouting' where is that sister, come let us rape her, at least 100 people rape. They found me under the staircase and took me out to the road. There I saw Fr. Chellan was kneeling down and the crowd was beating him with hands and sticks. They were searching for a rope to tie both of us together to burn us in fire. Someone suggested to make us parade naked. They made us to walk on the road till Nwagaon market which was half a kilometer from there. They made us to fold our hands and walk. I was with petticoat and saree as they had already torn away my blouse and undergarments. They tried to strip even there but I resisted and they went on beating me with hands on my cheeks and head and with sticks on my back several times.

When we reached the market place a dozen of OSAP policemen were there. I went to them asking to protect me and I sat in between two policemen but they did not move. One from the crowd again pulled me out from there and they wanted to lock us in their temple mandap. The crowd led me and Fr. Thomas Chellan to the Nuagaon block building saying that they will hand us over to B.D.O. From there along with the block officer the mob took us to the police outpost, Nuagaon, other police men remained far.

The mob said that they will comeback after eating and one of them who attacked me remained back in the police outpost. Policemen then came to police outpost. They were talking very friendly with the man who had attacked me and stayed back. In police outpost we remained until the inspector in charge of Balliguda with his police team came and took us to Balliguda. They were afraid to take us straight to the police station and they kept us sometime in jeep in the garage, from there they brought us to the station. The inspector incharge and other two government officers took me privately and asked whatever happened to me. I narrated everything in detail to the police, how I was attacked, raped, taken away from policemen, paraded half naked and how the police men did not help me when I asked for help while weeping bitterly. I saw the inspector writing down. The inspector asked me "are you interested in filing FIR?" Do you know what will be the consequence? At about 10.00 p.m., I was taken for medical checkup

accompanied by a lady police officer to Balliguda Hospital. They were afraid to keep us in police station, saying that the mob may attack police station. So the police took us to the IB (inspection bungalow) where CRP men were camping.

On 26/08/08 around 9.00 a.m. we were taken to Baliguda Police Station. When I was writing the FIR, the Inspector In-Charge (IIC) asked me to hurry up and not to write in detail. When I started writing about the police, the I .I. C told me this is not the way to write FIR, make it short. So I re-wrote it for the third time in one and half page. I filed the FIR, but I was not given a copy of it.

At around 4.00 pm the inspector in charge of Balliguda police station along with some other government officers put us in the OSRTC bus to Bhuvaneshwar along with other stranded passengers. Police were there till Rangamati where all passengers had their supper. After that I did not see the police. We got down near Nayagarh and traveled in private vehicle and reached Bhuvaneshwar around 2.00 am on 27th August.

State police failed to stop the crimes, failed to protect me from the attackers, they were friendly with the attackers, and they tried their best that I did not register an FIR, not make complaints against police, police did not take down my statement as I narrated in detail and they abandoned me half of the way. I was raped and now I don't want to be victimized by the Orissa Police. I want C.B.I enquiry. God bless India, God bless you all."[CDX]

Sister Meena stated that, "*One man in the crowd told him not to do any further harm and so he left me."* Mysteriously in the *Rediff.com* version, this statement was removed. Perhaps the scenario stretched the limits of credibility and was left out. It does indeed demand the suspension of logic to envision a brutal enraged mob, in the midst of bestial madness, to be so dissuaded. Another claim Meena makes is that the crowd of alleged religious extremists considered locking her and the priest in a Hindu temple. For a people that had vociferously resented the visit of a Hindu Pana to a Shiva temple, such a thought would not arise. After the Hindu Pana's visit to the temple, these Kandha Hindus had performed elaborate purification rituals leading to a violent response by the Panas. Clearly Hindu temples would not be used in such a manner by these very same people.

CDX **Statement of Sister Meena** October 23, 2008 http://www.cbcisite.com/cbcinews2513.htm

Sister Meena's rape accusation combined with the media's *'carte blanche'* acceptance and promotion of her allegations as proven fact acted as a kind of psychological weapon. It has many anomalous aspects. The timing of the stories release is one of them. As cited earlier the *London Times* report dated August 28, 2008 spoke of rape a month before any such incidents appeared in the Indian media. *"Followers of the VHP, the extremist group for which Saraswati was a figurehead retaliated through attacks on scores of Christian targets including murders, rapes and the destruction of dozens of Churches."*[CDXI]

The Christian former Director General of Police, Delhi told NDTV he was aware of the rape allegations early on, yet, according to his statement, the media and Orissa government ignored his tips. A Christian blogger writing less than 48 hours after the assassination of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati referred to Hindu victim Rajani Majhi as a nun. *"NUN REPORTED BURNT ALIVE" A Christian woman, possibly a nun , was reported burnt alive on the 25th of August by a group of VHP mob which stormed the orphanage she ran in the district of Bargarh, Orissa. NUN RAPED. A young Catholic Nun of the Cuttack-Bhuvaneshwar diocese and working at the Jan Vikas Kendra, the social service center at Nuuuagaon in Kandhamal was reportedly gang raped on the 24th of August 2008 by groups of Hindu extremists before the building itself was destroyed."*[CDXII]

Strangely, this very early report, written on the 25th of August, claims that the nun's rape occurred on the 24th of August. This contradicts the later timeline that has the rape taking place a day later on August 25. The accuser, Sister Meena claims she informed the police of *'everything'* including the rape. Yet, initially, she did not mention rape. Reports based upon the PTI or Press Trust of India revealed that, *"Initially, she did not allege rape, but in her FIR, she did."*[CDXIII]

The evening of August 25th, Sister Meena did not speak of rape in her initial police statement. The next morning she files an FIR and makes the first mention of rape. *"Initially the police claimed that they had rescued the Father and the Nun from the mob which was about to kidnap them and that the Nun's statement was recorded in the presence of 2 witnesses. Though the nun had denied the rape allegations during recording of her statement,*

CDXI **Times of London** '*Vatican condemns anti-Christian violence by Hindu extremists in Orissa*' August 28, 2008
CDXII **Christian Persecution in India** eblogger.com
CDXIII **Mid-Day** October 5, 2008

she later gave a written complaint alleging that she was raped by one person from among the mob,' sources added."[CDXIV]

For whatever reasons, the Indian media delayed publication of the nun's rape allegations. As the outrage turned from shock at the Swami's killing to acts of mass violence, the news was released. The nun's allegations were instantly magnified into widespread condemnation of Orissa's Administration, police and leading Hindu groups.

According to Sister Meena, as she sat in between two policemen, they did nothing to protect her as an attacker pulled her away. It was at this point that she alleges the attackers suggested taking her and the priest to a nearby Hindu temple. Instead they brought them to the police block and eventually to the police outpost of Nuagaon. She claims that the police were speaking in a friendly manner with her captors. From here the 2 Christians were taken into the care of the Inspector in charge of Baliguda. According to the nun's own statement the Inspector hid them in a jeep and made efforts to conceal the identity of the priest and nun. It was after they were safely in Baliguda Police station that she made an official statement. Contradicting both the police records and PTI (*Press Trust of India*) reports, Sister Meena now claims that at this point she informed the police that she had been raped. Again the nun states the police were concerned for both her and the priest's safety and thus removed them to the IB (Intelligence Bureau) for protection by CRPF. The contradictions are obvious and beggar belief. The same police, who repeatedly acted to protect the nun and the priest, now found themselves accused of aiding and abetting the rapists. From Sister Meena's testimony the moment the Inspector in Charge of Baliguda arrived, there were successful and repeated efforts made towards the safety and well being of the Christians. This speaks towards the credibility of the police. In a consistent pattern, the police saw to the security of the nun and priest.

Looking closely at the testimonials and evidence, a very different story arises than that portrayed by the nun, Sister Meena. After being attacked by a mob of angry Kandhas, Sister Meena and Father Chellan made it to the market, the dozen OSAP (Police) took control of the victims and protected them from further attack. Fearing for their safety, a group of concerned Hindu citizens had brought the nun and priest to the safety of the

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[CDXIV] **Financial Express** October 5, 2008

police. The police were armed with SLR guns and fully capable of defending the nun. In an effort to protect the two Christians from the nearby mob, the police and concerned citizens discussed various ideas. One idea was to hide them at a nearby Hindu temple, for who would ever consider hunting for them there? In the end it was decided that the two Christians should be brought to the police station. The nearby station, being nothing more than an outpost, only served as a temporary asylum as the police evacuated the two to the safety of the Baliguda Police station.

The allegations against the police, made by Sister Meena, are odd in light of the evidence. The image of entire police forces of multiple commands, ranks and individuals ruthlessly and casually forsaking ethical and lawful conduct has been casually accepted as a fact. The opposite is the truth as police officer after officer acted within their capacity to protect the Christians.

The news media, both national and international, manipulated the gangrape allegation into their favorite image of choice; *'Savage Hindus gangraping a helpless Christian Nun'*. The layers of deceit, manipulative reporting and exaggeration are palpable. If it were truth there would be no need for fabrication of the facts. They would speak for themselves. What are some of these facts? Important facts include:

1. The Nun did not report being raped than mysteriously added rape to her complaint the next day
2. The alleged rape was reported upon as occurring a day before it took place and the source for this claim is listed as the Buvaneshwar Archbishop's house.
3. The pattern of late reporting of rape is intentional and had been used in the 1999 false rape case. This was the infamous '*Nun raped in a moving car by men in saris*'. This case was proven false after days of anti-Hindu media hype. In her initial complaint, rape was not mentioned but was added to her testimony a full 24 hrs later.
4. Forensic evidence revealed that the Nun Meena was sexually active. No vaginal injuries signifying rape were found yet semen was recovered. Voices urged the police to compare the semen with the DNA of the accompanied priest.
5. No evidence of rape was found upon the clothes of the nun in tests conducted by the SFSL (Orissa State Forensic Science Lab). *"The official verified the clothes which were used by the nun on that particular day found no evidence," privileged sources in the SFSL revealed. No sign of sexual intercourse was found in the clothes after several*

rounds of verification using chemicals and other items sources further add. Sources said that the officials have submitted this report to SFSL chief Shyam Sunder Hansdah."[CDXV]

6. The media, rather than relying in facts, went overboard in misrepresenting the case and the creation of an alternate reality that fit their preconceived agendas. A brief scanning of the national and international media coverage of the alleged rape makes this quite evident. The nun clearly stated she was raped by one man yet the media shouted over and over again '*Gangrape*' as if it were a kind of slogan designed to shock and shame. In an early statement made a full 2 weeks before the official statement of October 24th the nun reported to CNN-IBN:

"I was hiding in a house, that is a Hindu house, in [inaudible]. They came inside, about 40 to 50 people with all the weapons in their hands and they saw me there ... recognized that I am a sister. One of them gave me one slap on my face and pulled me out from there by holding my hair.. took me out back door two of them holding my neck and wanted to cut my neck.. Anyway they left there and they started pulling my saree and dragged me to the road along with father ... ah ... they found also father Chellan ...They took us both to the road they took.. took me into the [inaudible] there over they removed my blouse, they tore out my ..my bra and they cast me to the ground and two of them were stepping my hands on both sides and one ... one raped me . one person ..and they were shouting I heard - where is that sister? Come we will rape her at least hundred people will rape and leave - like that they were saying. ***Earlier I didn't know I have not seen them but now if I see I ... I will recognize them*** *...* ***At that moment no police were there .. no police were there*** *... then ah they... told .. told me that they will hand.. hand me over to the police so I ..I ..still.. I got courage then they took me out again from there to the road by then they poured kerosene on father Chellan and they wanted to burn and they were beating him with sticks and iron bars um… then they made us to walk to the market."*[CDXVI]

Several things stand out from the transcript above. The alleged victim clearly says that she was raped by one person. Meanwhile the media played up the "*gang rape of nun*" by a "*fanatic Hindu mob*". In addition, police were not present at the actual location of the confrontation. This is quite clear from the testimony. The police were at the marketplace where presumably the victim was taken to. This early testimony is very different from

CDXV **Odisha Diary** October 22, 2008

CDXVI **CNN-IBN Report** '*Shame and Rape in Orissa-Nun Recalls Nightmare*'
http://www.ibnlive.com/videos/75049/shame-raped-in-orissa-nun-recalls-nightmare.html

Sister Meena's later claim that *"the police stood mute spectators while a fanatic Hindu mob gang had raped her".*

According to the claims of Sister Meena, the police were not on the scene during the alleged rape. She clearly indicates this when she stated that *"There were no Police there…no police were there."* The media, however, repeatedly claimed that *'the police stood mute spectators while a fanatic Hindu mob gangraped a nun.'* The nun seemed quite confused. *"Earlier I didn't know I have not seen them but now if I see, I will recognize them."*In a court of law such a statement would be damning. However in a trial by media it is unimportant and irrelevant. Despite the nun's early and direct testimony that no police were present, the media repeatedly claimed the police merely stood by as she was raped. The nun's story suddenly began to replicate the media version of events. By October 22nd the State of Orissa, the police, the courts and the Hindus had all been condemned and convicted for the rape of a helpless nun. The nun's testimony changed repeatedly according to the whims of powers unseen. In a clear case of conspiracy, the claims of the nun were in a constant state of flux. The media ignored the obvious inconsistencies and augmented the story. Suddenly the nun's claim of being raped by 1 man became a gangrape by 50 men.

"A Roman Catholic Nun who accused a Hindu mob of raping her said Friday that she will not cooperate with local police, alleging that they stood by idly during the attack…the nun said a group of about 50 men tore off her clothes and raped her."[CDXVII]

This intentional campaign of misinformation designed to defame and shame was flashed around the world. *The Australian* wrote *"A nun in East India has spoken out the first time on live TV about allegations she was gangraped by more than 40 men in August, accusing police of complicity in Hindu attacks on Christians."* Headlines around the world screamed, *"Mob of 50 Hindus Gangrape Nun".* The world media went overboard in inflating and manipulating the story in a manner indicative of an intentional and global effort to sully the reputation of India, its people and its culture. India's premiere newspaper, the *Times of India* is complicity involved in this calumnious campaign. As the news broke, a flurry of reports appeared as various news outlets competed to reveal

[CDXVII] **Herald Extra** October 22, 2008

the salacious details. A pattern of falsification and manipulation of the rape allegation soon followed.

Times of India article modified on Oct 4: Headline changed, URL remains the same. "First, let's analyze the TOI (Times of India) report in question. On Oct 3, this report was first published, headlined: Medical report suggests nun raped; probe ordered, and can be still accessed from google cache. The screenshot (A) is the cached report, which has this to say: "The woman was medically examined and the report received by us suggests possibility of rape," Kandhamal Superintendent of Police Praveen Kumar told. According to the report of the nun's medical examination, there was no external or internal vaginal injury, but semen was found inside. The nun's clothes have been sent for tests to the state forensic laboratory. Note the "suggests" part. Note the mention of no injuries that could definitively establish sexual assault. On October 4, the same article was mysteriously modified. The headline now reads: 38 days later, Orissa govt admits nun's rape. It is incomprehensible that a third party can actually "admit" to something that happened between a perp and a victim, but nevertheless this "admission" has evoked euphoric reaction in the Commie circles. The screenshot (B) of the report now carries the following: Orissa police claimed on Friday they "received" the medical report - which found injuries to the victim's private parts and pointed to sexual assault - only on October 1. But doctors have a different story. Dr Sangeeta Mishra, who along with Dr Smita Marandi, performed the examination at Baliguda government hospital on the night of the incident, has a different story. The modified report now claims there were injuries consistent with sexual assault. The nun did not allege rape initially, but later mentioned that she had been raped by one person, in an FIR. Various news reports now claim that she was gangraped. Initial reports suggested the possibility of rape or rather "the report did not rule out rape" and "no injuries but semen was present". By now, the Nun was brutally gangraped by a mob and medical reports incontrovertibly establishing rape have surfaced. Predictably the victim is untraceable and taken to an undisclosed location, but the media has full access to her. The chances of abusing the situation are mind boggling. If one adds to it presumptive behavioral patterns expected of Nuns and by implication the alternate more acceptable theory, the situation becomes too complicated. We are not suggesting that we have the last word on this incident - the incident must be thoroughly investigated and the guilty, if any, must be punished to the fullest extent of the law, but TOI (Times of India) updating its story rather than issuing a new one (they have published

hundreds of stories on the incident) is highly suspicious. This type of complication puts further strain on our already fragile secular nation."[CDXVIII]

Below the two distinct versions of the same *Times of India* article are placed side by side. The manipulation is clear. In an apparent abandonment of all sense of fairplay and legality, the media attempted to lead the public to an artificial and preordained conclusion. By intentionally modifying the story, the *Times of India* manipulated the news in order to maximize the potential damage to the Orissa administration and Hindu activist organizations.

CDXVIII **Burden of Proof** http://barbarindians.blogspot.com/2008/10/burden-of-proof.html

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Medical report suggests nun raped; probe ordered

3 Oct 2008, 1407 hrs IST,PTI

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BHUBANESWAR: Thirty-nine days after a nun was allegedly



background-color: rgb(255, 102, 255);">raped during the Kandhamal riots, the crime branch on Friday took charge of investigating the case.

The step was taken following the medical report collected by the police from hospital on Thursday.

"The crime branch of state police under the direct supervision of inspector general of police (crime) will conduct the investigation," highly placed sources said.

Four persons were arrested and Inspector in-charge of Baliguda police station, K N Rao was suspended with immediate effect for not acting promptly on the complaint, as the medical report stated possibility of rape, they said.

"The woman was medically examined and the report received by us suggests possibility of rape," Kandhamal Superintendent of Police Praveen Kumar told.

According to the report of the nun's medical examination, there was no external or internal vaginal injury, but semen was found inside.

The nun's clothes have been sent for tests to the state forensic laboratory.

The four arrested persons are being interrogated, the sources said, adding that they will also undergo medical examination.

Asked whether there had been an attempt to suppress the matter, a senior police officer said, "It is a fact that the nun concerned and Pastor Thomas Chellam were assaulted by a mob. But allegation of rape had not been confirmed all these days."

Initially the police had claimed that they had rescued the Father and the nun from the mob which was about to kidnap them and that the nun's statement was recorded in the presence of two witnesses.

"Though the nun had denied the rape allegation during recording of her statement, she later gave a written complaint alleging that she was raped by one person from among the mob. A case was also registered subsequently," the sources added.

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38 days later, Orissa govt admits nun's rape

4 Oct 2008, 0007 hrs IST,TNN

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BHUBANESWAR/NEW DELHI: Yet another shameful chapter in sectarian strife was added when the Orissa government confirmed on Friday that a 29-year-old Catholic nun was raped by a fanatical Hindu gang on August 25, while the police ignored her pleas for help and looked the other way.



After dragging its feet for 38 days, the state government finally woke up to media reports and outrage across the country and abroad to arrest four suspects and suspend the inspector in-charge of Baliguda police station in Kandhamal, where the rape took place.

Orissa CM Naveen Patnaik, who has been keeping a remarkably low profile despite the state being rocked by anti-Christian violence for six weeks now, on Friday describing the rape as a "shameful" and "savage" act and promising "stringent action" against the culprits. But he parried questions on the inordinate delay in the case, saying "action is being taken".

In New Delhi, PM Manmohan Singh told his colleagues at a cabinet meeting that these incidents have tarred India's image abroad. He directed the Union home ministry to submit a report that will be discussed by the cabinet next week. Several other ministers spoke up, criticizing the Orissa government, although none of them has yet sought the government's sack.

Home Minister Shivraj Patil has shot off a letter to Patnaik asking him to do more to control the violence. He pointed out that despite a 5,000-strong central force presence in Orissa, violence has not been contained in Kandhamal. An MI-17 helicopter was also in Bhubaneswar from August 31, a week after violence began, to September 11, but was hardly used.

Orissa police claimed on Friday they "received" the medical report — which found injuries to the victim's private parts and pointed to sexual assault — only on October 1. But doctors have a different story.
Dr Sangeeta Mishra, who along with Dr Smita Marandi, performed the examination at Baliguda government hospital on the night of the incident, have a different story.

Facts stand on their own and do not require falsification of events and evidence. The collective attempts to coverup and manipulate the rape claims of Sister Meena clearly indicate the false premise of her claims. When all the facts and circumstances are revealed, it is obvious that the nun rape story has been developed without regard to the facts, the evidence and the truth. After investigation, State officials found no evidence to verify the nun Sister Meena's claims and announced that the nun's rape allegations were baseless. The State of Orissa told the Supreme Court that the allegations in the petition on the rape of a nun and other violent incidents in Kandhamal district are without any evidence.[CDXIX]

In the Nun's original FIR (written in English) filed at the Baliguda Police Station on August 26th, she states, *"…40 armed men arrived at the Divyajoti Pastoral Centre, me and the Father (Father Thomas) jumped over the boundary and ran to a nearby forest. They were shouting Bharat Mata Ki Jai. They burnt the centre…the next day we concealed ourselves in the house of Prahlad Pradhan of K. Nuagaon but at 1 pm the mob found us and dragged me and Father out. They took me to Jan Vikash (a local NGO office) and made me naked. There one of them raped me. After that they paraded me naked in the street and took me to an official at K. Nuagoan."*[CDXX]

The evidence strongly suggests that Sister Meena's rape charges are part of a well thought out conspiracy. The entire episode raised suspicions throughout India and not a shred of evidence has been discovered so far. At this point it is based on the allegations of the nun alone.

On the 20th October, *Odisha Today Daily* reported that State Forensic Lab sources found no sign of sexual intercourse in her clothes during examination. Report of the nun's medical examination said that there was no external or internal vaginal injury, but semen stains were found inside. PTI (*Press Trust of India*) further reported that though the nun had denied the rape allegation during recording of her statement, she much later gave a complaint after the medical examination report, alleging that she was raped by one person from among the mob. Despite the media's automatic conviction of the Hindu activists of the Bajrang Dal, police investigators and the State of Orissa confirmed that there was absolutely no credible evidence to the accusations against the Bajrang Dal.

CDXIX **Deccan Herald** 'Nun's rape case baseless' October 18, 2008
CDXX **Sister Meena First Incident Report '***Case # 70/2008'* August 26, 2008

"The Orissa government Friday told the Supreme Court that the archbishop of Cuttack must substantiate his allegation that Bajrang Dal activists were behind the rape of a nun in the state's troubled Kandhamal district. Senior counsel K.K. Venugopal, appearing for the Orissa government before a bench of Chief Justice K.G. Balakrishnan and Justice P. Sathasivam, refuted allegations of Bajrang Dal activists being responsible for the nun's rape. Venugopal submitted that before seeking a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the case, the Archbishop Raphel Cheenath must substantiate his allegations with credible evidence. Earlier, the Orissa Police too had denied the allegations that the Bajrang Dal was involved in the nun's rape."[CDXXI]

Sanjay Choudhry, a political watcher, made a keen observation, *"How nice!! The priest collects information from the media, and the media collects information from the priest! And the Hindus hang their heads in shame over the "rape" of the nun. This Archbishop should be arrested for spreading rumors in socially tense times in an attempt to increase animosity between two communities. All such "rape of nuns" allegations emanate from Christian priests who, once they have ensured such reports have appeared in Indian and Western press to "prove" persecution of Christians, begin to quietly back-track after the storm has passed. Neither the victim, nor the eye witness, or even the perpetrators are anywhere to be found. Everybody vanishes into thin air but Hindus hang their heads in shame over "crimes" pulled out from some priest's arse. Why are FIRs not being registered against these priests of Orissa for spreading canards to heighten social tensions?"*

The nun's appearance before the media sparked off a hot debate among the clergy and the laity about the Church's propriety in making her do so. *"The decision to present the nun who was raped in Orissa's Kandhamal district at a press conference on Friday sparked a huge internal debate among church workers. Many wondered whether the nun should have been brought into the public domain and whether her statement needed a personal appearance. 'For the sake of justice for a community, a religious nun is raped in front of the media. Why again?'' asks another nun."*[CDXXII]

The nun and her handlers refused to cooperate with the authorities and the police investigators. In an apparent attempt to manipulate the outcome of the inquiry, the nun

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[CDXXI] **IANS Indo-Asian News Service** '*Nun's rape: Orissa asks for proof of Bajrang Dal role*' October 18, 2008

[CDXXII] **Times News Network** '*Nun's appearance sparks debate among Church workers*' October 25, 2008

pleaded with the Supreme Court to hand the investigation over to the Central Government's CBI. *"The Supreme Court today declined to hand over to CBI the investigation into the alleged rape of a nun during the on-going communal violence in Orissa, "At this stage we do not think that handing over the investigation into the case from the state police to the CBI is in the interest of the victim as well as in the interest of justice. We think that the victim will cooperate with the state police," a Bench headed by Chief Justice K G Balakrishnan said.*
The Bench noted that the victim has left the area and was refusing to participate in the Test Identification Parade (TIP), though nine persons have been arrested in connection with the alleged rape."[CDXXIII]

The nun acted in an extraordinarily manner. Failing to get her way with the Supreme Court she attempted to shame India's judicial system by taking her allegations to the English language press. The Press turned it into an instant media circus. Acting as if she were above the lawful authority of the democratically elected system, the nun refused to comply with any and all official requests by the police. People felt that, *"Evidently her allegations were not made in order to be investigated but to be used as a bludgeon to discredit the entire State of Orissa."* The nun acted as an invisible accuser and denied the accused their right to defend themselves.

The State, for its part, failed its citizens and abandoned its commitment to blind justice and equality. Repeatedly declaring its willingness to travel to the nun, at State expense, the State verily certified the veracity of the nun's testimony. This effectively tainted the case as the State response gave credence to the nun's claims. Chief Minister Patnaik issued a formal apology as the media depicted the nun's testimony as established fact. The media, having never embarked upon any in-depth investigation into the case, declared the nun as courageous. For all intents and purposes, the nun's revelations may have been based upon a well scripted plot. The guilt or innocence of the accused has yet to be established yet the media decided that the rape allegations were factual.

"Displaying immense courage, the Orissa nun on Friday revealed in full media glare that she was attacked and raped by a violent mob during the communal violence in Orissa."[CDXXIV]

Many of Orissa's people questioned the overall scenario and the contorted media crusade against Orissa. *"When NDTV broadcast an interview with a "Maoist leader" who*

[CDXXIII] **Morung Express** '*Supreme Court rejects Nun's Plea for CBI inquiry*' October 22, 2008
[CDXXIV] **Zee News** "*Nun Reveals Rape*' October 24, 2008

claimed to kill Swami Lakshmananda, the so-called Maoist leader had his face cloaked. It was impossible to recognize him. This infers it was a sham interview, meant to defame Hindus and shield the prime suspects in the murder, the Pana Christians. Now we have a repeat performance, a woman who cannot be recognized claiming to be a "nun" alleging rape. Notably, she comes after the Supreme Court has rejected a demand for a CBI inquiry into "her" rape, and now she pleads for a CBI inquiry! To whom has she addressed the appeal? To the English language press! And who is this individual who has made this claim? None can accurately make out what took place except the Church leaders and politicians who put her up to it!"[CDXXV]

The truth does not rely upon such obvious and blatant exaggerations and falsifications to stand the test of investigation. Conspiracies and calculated agendas do however depend upon such chicanery. The entire scenario bespeaks of a concerted effort to discredit India's Nationalists and traditionalists. It is an assault intended to destroy the ever increasing and expanding electoral support base of the BJP and other Hindu Nationalist political groups. It is not only the BJP, RSS and VHP that have been the target of this conspiracy. The entire Indian system of police, security and law and order has been ruthlessly attacked.

The partisan accusations against the Indian army in Kashmir have become commonly used against India's entire police and security infrastructure. As the enemies of the State wage a merciless war against India, their supporters provide the rationale for the ongoing massacres. Apologists for murder, such as Arundhati Roy, claim that India should give up Kashmir. They ignore that such a move would be to sanction genocide, ethnic cleansing, religious exclusivism and lead to the ruin of India's indigenous civilization. Allegedly speaking from a humanitarian perspective, Roy ignores the reality of the Pakistani track record.

At partition, Hindus accounted for approximately 33% of Pakistan's population. That number is now below 3%. While Arundhati Roy and other allegedly liberal progressives claim the mantle of tolerance they clearly discombobulate the truth. All one needs to do to understand what is at stake is to think in authentically humanitarian terms. Issues such as freedom of speech, freedom of sexuality and equality for all, significantly women, are the barometers of humanity. These same alleged progressives, who decry and defame India, ignore reality. The fact is they thrive precisely by being in India and

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[CDXXV] **Author Interview with Utkal University Students** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa October 25, 2008

their same words and acts, if directed against Pakistan or any other Islamic nation from within the Umma, would lead to imprisonment or death. Yet they take advantage of their constitutional freedoms to attack the very foundation of the State which allows them to prosper as the direct opponents of the State. By urging India to forsake Kashmir, they call on India to abandon the Kashmiri people to a rule devoid of basic freedoms, civil rights and other basics of a functioning democracy.

The constant cry of these people is that the people have no faith or trust in the police, the army, the government and judicial system. It is illuminating. This appears to be the formulaic and scripted refrain of all anti-National anti-State politically partisan extremists. Father Peter concluded his discredited rape story with the statement, *"The Christians have lost trust in the government."* The nun Meena stated that she, *"…didn't want to be victimized by the Orissa Police."* She uses the same refrain, *"I have no trust in the police or State authorities."*

These statements are not merely reflections of traumatized angst; rather they indicate something much more sinister. They are actually jockeying to remove themselves from the lawful jurisdiction of the government. They are artificially attempting to elevate themselves above and beyond their position as equal citizens under the law. Identifying themselves as the representatives of a superior, exclusive and unique elite, these members of the Indian minority have positioned themselves as above the democratic foundations of the Nation-State. While benefitting and thriving upon the benefits specified for India's Minority-centric constitutional system, they attack the very support structures of the privileges they enjoy. Cashing in on the benefits and tax havens, minority pressure groups are empowered with special rights disconcordant with the plight of their Hindu neighbors.

India's electoral system is the last domain of the Hindu majority. This majority has increasingly supported the BJP. This continual shift towards the BJP has forced the hand of their opponents. Rather than abiding by the will of the people, the minority has embarked upon a campaign of calumny. The voters have been painted as resentful and blood thirsty. The BJP has been portrayed as murderous and genocidal. In their view if the people 'foolishly' vote the BJP into power, the Nation of India must be protected from their stupidity. India's anti-BJP politicians, rather than maintaining the role of the loyal opposition, become virtual enemies of the State seeking any means, fair or foul, to discredit and dismantle the administration. In other words, for many Leftists and

others, trust in the political system and administration depends upon personal part y preference. The institutions of governance have little value in themselves. More importance is given towards the political party in power above and beyond the actual functioning of the office in question. Thus many of India's Leftist elites, the National media and minority pressure groups fail to see the dichotomy of their oft-repeated declarations of *'lost faith and trust'* in the government. India's Minority leaders, empowered financially, constitutionally and politically have become a major obstacle towards stability. By constantly undermining India's Democracy, they have developed a disruptive mentality. It is this mentality that is at the foundation of India's communal tensions.This dangerous mentality is the fuel that feeds the crisis.

None can refute that the police and government have their flaws and have earned their due criticism. No doubt the corruption is real but it is no excuse for the carte blanche rejection of all civil authourity. Such a wholesale rejection of the entire governmental system is unjustifiable and is a threat to the functioning of civil society. Such rejections reflect an anti-social outlook. By declaring a lack of faith or trust in the legal authorities they have positioned themselves as being above the rule of law. They act unbound by the democratically elected administration and in contempt of the judicial and political system. By demanding exclusive treatment they set themselves apart from the overall public community. Not only do they demand special rights above and beyond that of their fellow citizens they have repeatedly called upon the intervention of authorities outside of the democratically elected State system. They call upon distant powers to interfere and usurp the lawful authourity of the State and the Nation. Allowing personal views and prejudices to be paramount, they doom the functioning of the Democratic State.

In the case of Orissa, its Christian leaders have repeatedly called upon the Central Government to trample the authority of the State Government. Based upon a hostility and animosity towards the BJP, they urged the Chief Minister of Orissa to forgo the will of the people and dismiss the government. In the past, mass violence swept across the State of Orissa. The violence was of a similar nature and intensity but it occurred during the time of the Congress Party's administration. Unlike the BJP, the Congress Party was never accused of orchestrating the violence. Despite controlling the mechanisms of governance and failing to maintain the peace, Congress escaped any condemnation. In contrast, condemnation and blame is instantly leveled at the BJP during any time of

crisis. Public denunciations are made without the slightest attempts at investigation or validation of events. Declarations are made condemning the BJP and the entire functioning mechanisms of governance are labeled as untrustworthy and dangerous. While simultaneously demanding protection and support they announce a lack of faith in the government. This a clear call towards the intervention of a Supra-State power. Invoking such a power that functions outside the democratic moorings of a local community sets a dangerous precedent. Rather than working within the functions of the electoral process, attempts are made to countermand the will of the people and dismantle their choice of governance.

Such calls for the intervention of various disconnected and outside powers are not solely the purview of Orissa's Christian community. We find this same attitude being espoused by the Kashmiri Pakistani elements and even by the Indian Muslim leaders. Syed Ahmed Bukhari, the Shahi Imam of Dehli's Jama Masjid stated, "*We have lost faith in the administration and police of the Country*." Again failing to have their way in a democracy, they declare that they don't trust the government merely because they truly feel it is not their government and democracy, so let it be damned. Such calls are an implicit appeal for an alternate power to take control. Some Kandhamal Christians have now developed the attitude of separatists. Making demands very similar to those of many other groups disruptive of National Unity; they weaken the fabric of country.

"We want a separate district for us so that we can live happily and peacefully. We have already submitted a memorandum in this regard to the governor during his recent visit to Kandhamal", said Lal Mohan Digal, an inmate of the Tikabali relief camp set up by the Kandhamal district administration for Christian riot victims."[CDXXVI]

This same separatist mentality is at the foundation of India's many secessionist groups. Thus we see the Kashmiri terrorists and Pakistanis demanding UN intervention. Extra - National forces with no foundation in Democracy are controlled by forces completely disconnected from the people. India's Muslim and Christian leadership is disingenuously calling upon outside forces to bully India into serving their interests. India's people deserve better. India, with its built-in 5th column empowered by India's 4th Estate is now the world's leading victim of terrorism (Iraq as a war zone is in a different category.) While the blood of innocents is shed in an unholy war of terror, the

[CDXXVI] **Deccan Herald** '*Christians want to Secede from Kandhamal*' October 17, 2008

Arundhati Roys, Angana Chatterjis, many Christian and Muslim leaders remain silent only to chatter about the horrors of the Hindu Fascists. Never mind the Maoist massacres, Islamist terror strikes, machine gun and grenade attacks on girls, schools, and old men and women.

On the rumors and the unsubstantiated claims against the RSS, VHP, BJP, and others; while real blood is shed and lives are lost by the thousands at the hands of the Maoists and Islamists, they wax eloquently about the end of Indian secularism. In this view, bombs and guns are a trivial concern but democracy and the lawful campaigning of the BJP is the greatest threat to the Nation. The obvious dearth of logic and human concern exposes their shadowy designs and radical outlook.

EUROPE'S ANTI CONVERSION LAWS

"It should be clear from our report that Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe should not be the only areas of concern when religious liberty risks are evaluated. At least three countries in the European Union (France, Belgium and Germany) should be considered at risk with the addition of Greece." Dr. Massimo Introvigne, Managing Director, Center for the Study of New Religions

India is frequently accused of religious intolerance. This is primarily based on two factors. The first being the violent clashes involving Christians and Muslims. The second being the anti-conversion laws on the books in a few Indian states, including Orissa. First it must be noted that While the laws exist, they are not enforced. Is it also important to note that they do not prohibit conversion from one faith to another; rather they focus on the process involved. *"The Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967"* is quite clear in this regard. *"An act to provide for the prohibition of conversion from one religion to another by the use of force or inducement or by fraudulent means and for matters incidental thereto."*[CDXXVII]

India's anti-conversion laws were developed by India's Congress Party leadership long before the political rise of the BJP.

[CDXXVII] **OLRs Hand Book on Orissa Criminal Minor Acts,** p 528, Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967

"Orissa became the first State to adopt a law against forcible or surreptitious conversion; at that time, the Congress ruled the State and Mrs. Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister-she took a pro-active interest in the enactment of the law."[CDXXVIII]

Ironically this law has been attacked in the courts, the Press, in academic circles, by politicians, the Church, the Leftists, the Communists, Maoists terror groups, the US State Dept, the EU and others. Any sensible person would agree with such a law that restricts the use of force, inducement or fraud in any matter, what to speak of the sensitive and sacred realm of religion. In 1989, the Government clarified the rules in relation to the 1967 act. Validating freedom of religion and the right to adopt any religion, the State created a process by which the Christian Church and its converts can legally function within the framework and protection of the law. Through this mechanism there could be absolutely no question regarding the sincerity of the convert. Christians deny the need for any legislation since all they do is share the Words of Jesus. "*Here in the Bible we are called to witness the words of Christ to our fellows. We do not convert, we simply share the Word. If someone's eyes are open to the light of Jesus, Amen Brother, we welcome them.*"[CDXXIX]

The state of Orissa recognizes this and has responsibly designed a mechanism by which such "*Awakenings*" can be recognized as authentic. It stipulates that a list of religious institutions and organizations be maintained along with those directly involved in the propagation of the faith. This list includes all religions and is not exclusively focused on Christians. The state rules require a "*Declaration before Conversion*." This allows for the convert to implicitly state that he/she has converted of their own free will.[CDXXX]

Despite the tens of thousands of Christian conversions since these rules were established, only 2 people have complied. If these converts had complied with the law, none could question the validity of the Church's preaching efforts. The fact that the Church challenged these rules in Court raises serious concerns about their intentions. Claiming that the State rules are an attack on religious freedoms ignores the basic ground reality of Orissa's history, society and cultural sensitivities.

The fact is that the actual law and subsequent rules, if followed, would have provided absolute authenticity to the growth of Christianity in the state. When challenged by

CDXXVIII **Pioneer News Service** 'Conversion Conflict' August 26, 2008
CDXXIX **Author interview with Dr. Swarupananda Patra** Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa YMCA Sept. 20, 2008
CDXXX **Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1989** No. 70533 – Ref. – 1-5/87 – H.C.

accusations of force, fraud and inducement, the church and its supporters resort to vitriol, word jugglery and portray themselves as pitiable victims of prejudice and hatred. If the Church had maintained a commitment to the laws of the State, all accusations would have been responded to with the legitimacy of the law itself. Its converts would have been highlighted by their own legally sworn testimonials as the "*awakened*" people of Christ. The very fact that they have not testified to their "*Intent to Convert his religion of his own free will,*" is now seen as proof that the conversions are fraudulent.

Despite hundreds of thousands of new conversions, virtually none have complied with the rules. The Penalty, "*Any person who contravenes the provision of Rule 5 or 6 shall be liable to a fine of Rs. 1, 000,*"[CDXXXI] has never been enforced. Indicative of the extreme anti-Indian and specifically anti-Hindu bias at work, we find these very same legal acts and rules misrepresented as attacks on religious freedom. They are used by pastors as cynical fundraising tools, by the media, by India's political opponents within the UN and by India's political parties to harness the fears and prejudices of the Christian community.

This was obvious during the EU-India summit in September 2008 held in France. India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was ambushed during a conference held by India, France and the European Union. Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission suddenly challenged the Prime Minsiter regarding the '*atrocities*' being committed against the Christians of Orissa. French President Sarkozy chimed in as well with his concern for the ongoing '*massacres*' of Orissa's Christians as well. The great irony of this situation is compounded by the fact that these Western secular powers ignored India's thousands of dead and traumatized flood victims as they fretted over 20 Christian riot victims ignoring the Hindu dead.

The picture is even more egregious and the hypocrisy even more flagrant when we take into account the French track record. It appears that Europe is the domain of progressiveness and tolerance in name alone. Europe and France in particular, have yet to put into practice the liberal humanitarianism it espouses to the world. France has a long history of religious oppression. France, along with several other prominent EU members and Switzerland, has draconian anti-conversion laws. Unlike India's

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CDXXXI **Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1989, Section 8**, No. 70533 – Ref. – 1-5/87 – H.C.

legislation, these laws are enforced. Many have been victimized for merely practicing and promoting their religion. The issues and concerns that have arisen in India were raised in various European Parliaments. While the Indian authorities rarely if ever enforce their anti-conversion laws, Europe's anti-conversion laws are strictly enforced.

"Quietly the European Continent began to change how it viewed any religious group that was not a part of the State church system. In some countries that was the Catholic Church others the Lutheran Church, in others it was the Anglican Church, and in still others it was the Eastern Orthodox Church. The only thing that mattered was that if the religious group was not the State Church, or Jewish, or Muslim, it should be treated with suspicion. This was reinforced in countries like France, Belgium and Germany with 'Secte Reports'. These reports were not official acts of Parliament, but they had the force of official acts with the public. Newspapers published the lists. In France over 170 organizations were on the list. Of these, most were what we would consider cults. Some of them would even be properly classified as dangerous cults. Then, sprinkled in the list are a few groups that are considered mainstream Christian groups throughout the entire world. At first glance it might be a simple mistake. At closer look it is a clever plan. They start with a list that includes groups few of us would argue to protect. To that they add a couple of mainstream groups that are not part of the State system. Then they sit and wait. In one instance in France the courts actually ruled that a Pentecostal church on the list was not a "secte" and restored their tax exempt status. When the Parliament was given a copy of the court decision and asked to remove the Church from the list they replied that because it was not an official act of Parliament they could do nothing. After all, what harm was a simple list?"[CDXXXII]

Concern over the French government's continued assaults upon the free practice of religion reached the highest levels of the Christian community. The Pope, when accepting the credentials of a new French ambassador to the Vatican stated that discrimination against *"one or other form of religious practice ... will necessarily create a climate of tension, intolerance, opposition and suspicion, not conducive to social peace."*

In this we see yet another example of government's inability to enforce the rulings of the court. In India, court orders were ignored by an administration that failed to restore the land of the tribals. In France, courts were ignored as the government repressed freedom of religion. The Belgium and German governments also followed with its own

[CDXXXII] **The Coming Persecution** '*Europe,the Bigger Picture*' Joel Thornton April 19, 2008

anti-secte agenda. *"The Belgians added a couple of mainstream American Mission organizations to their 'secte' lists. Youth with a Mission and Operation Mobilization are listed as dangerous cults in Belgium. Additionally, they consider the Assemblies of God to be a dangerous cult. Finally, the Belgians consider the YWCA a dangerous cult. Ironically, few Christians in America even think of the YWCA as a religious organization. They are a great place to work out, swim and play football. The Germans kept their Committee establishing what new religious movements were 'sectes' a secret. After all, it might scare us if we know there were so many dangerous cults in our midst. Equally secret, the Germans never released their list. There were, nonetheless, rumors of groups that were listed that became public knowledge. One such group was a Christian church in Cologne, Germany. This church experienced persecution. They were harassed in the local and National Press. They were vilified on TV. Eventually, their tax exempt status was revoked. The Senior Pastor's wife suffered a fatal heart attack. Church members' children mocked at school by friends-and by school officials. After a 5 year battle the tax exempt status was restored. All of this occurred because a secret commission and its 'secret' report. All of this passed unnoticed by the majority of Europeans. After all, religion was for children and old people. Enlightened educated people did not need the crutch of religion to lead a fulfilled life. During this time fewer still in America paid attention."*[CDXXXIII]

Interestingly, the Chinese government did pay attention and sent a delegation to France in order to enhance its own repressive anti-religious laws. *"The French anti-cult law is scary in its own right. It is even scarier because it has led to the same debate in Italy, Belgium, and, believe it or not, China.* ***The Chinese have even sent a delegation to Paris to learn how to enact such a law.*** *Imagine a communist government prohibiting religion and doing it under the excuse that they are merely following the lead of the Christian French. The law was originally called the Law Against Mental Manipulation. The language regarding mental manipulation was taken out, but the same prejudice remained. The prejudice that religion served no valid purpose in the public discourse and, therefore, should be restricted in public, led French law makers to criminalize evangelistic activities. The law criminalizes an activity as simple as literature distribution if the person receiving the literature is a minor, a senior citizen, or a pregnant lady. All these groups are considered easily influenced and therefore should not be given religious literature. Under the French law a person convicted on a second offense of distributing literature to children, the aged, or pregnant ladies can be imprisoned for up to five years and fined up to $75,000. If the person is an elder or leader in a Church the entire Church property and finances can be confiscated by the Government. This is the persecution. This is*

CDXXXIII **The Coming Persecution** *'Europe,the Bigger Picture'* Joel Thornton April 19, 2008

going on now in Europe. If we do not think it could happen here, then let's continue to ignore the growth of secularism. Let's continue to ignore the growth of politically correct speech."[CDXXXIV]

American observers were perturbed and confounded by the French anti-secte legislation and even more disturbed by the implications of the Chinese response. The irony of France, America's traditional Sister in Liberty, now acting as a guide to the repressive Chinese Communist regime was not lost upon them.

"In further reaction to the passage of the French legislation, the Washington-based Institute on Religion and Public Policy said in a statement the law could criminalize evangelism by deeming it an 'exercise [in] serious and repeated pressure on a person in order to create or exploit a state of dependence.' 'This law represents the latest effort of extremists in France to pass repressive legislation designed to infringe upon the rights of targeted minority religions by manufacturing a means to ban disfavored minority religions from France," said the institute's president, Joseph K. Grieboski. Religious adherents elsewhere could also be affected by the move, he said, noting that the authorities in Hong Kong were closely monitoring the law as a potential model to act against the Falun Gong spiritual movement, regarded by the Chinese government as a dangerous sect. 'It is great shame that a liberal democratic society like that of France - a bastion and cradle of western democratic thought and civilization - would deprive its citizens of their most basic human rights," Grieboski said."[CDXXXV]

US governmental bodies also expressed great concern for Europe's rising tide of religious intolerance. The Americans urged the Europeans to live up to their very own stated commitments to religious liberty and human rights. T. Geremy Gunn, Executive Fellow, United States Institute of Peace, delivered a speech on freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on behalf of the U.S. Mission to the OSCE. He deals with governments' role in the preservation of religious freedom. He directly challenged the governments of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for their continued oppression of religious minorities.

CDXXXIV **Ibid.**

CDXXXV **CNS News** *'French Christians Fear Ramifications Of Anti-Sect Law'* Patrick Goodenough May 31, 2001

U.S. STATEMENT ON FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, CONSCIENCE, RELIGION AND BELIEF

"Despite a number of judgments against Greece in the European Court of Human Rights, it's Constitution and Laws of Necessity continue to be used against religious minorities in contravention of the freedom to express religious beliefs and to convince others of their views. The United States notes that the Greek Government's tolerance of minority religious groups has improved since the end of 1997 and there have been fewer arrests for proselytizing. Still, the United States urges the Government of Greece to bring its laws and regulations into conformity with OSCE standards. Three European countries, Austria, Belgium, and France, have established government "anti-sect" agencies that give rise to the very concerns about tolerance raised by Mr. Krishnaswami forty years ago. A delegation from the United States met with officials from these commissions to learn how the agencies would operate and what steps would be taken to ensure that the agencies do not become vehicles for promoting prejudice and stereotypes. In several cases, we were pleased to hear assurances that the agencies would be open-minded and fair. One official stated, however, that his agency would refuse to meet with the groups that it describes as "sects" - thereby giving the groups no official opportunity to respond to the allegations that are made against them. Parliamentary reports in Belgium and France attached lists of "sects" without giving the groups the full opportunity to respond to allegations against them. By failing to hear directly from the groups that are being criticized, governments and parliaments are falling short of the repeated advice provided at the OSCE Supplementary Meeting earlier this year to engage in a dialogue with the groups.

The United States urges the new agencies in Austria, Belgium, and France to demonstrate their commitment to the principles of tolerance by:

1. Avoiding use of the pejorative terms "sect" and "cult" when speaking of new religious movements.

2. Refraining from implying that most new or small religious and belief-based groups are dangerous or threatening.

3. Engaging in a serious and open dialogue with all religious and belief-based groups that are of concern to governments.

4. Establishing open, transparent, and fair procedures, including the right to respond to allegations, when investigations are conducted against groups.

5. Publicly announcing support for the principles of tolerance and discouraging citizens from discriminating against minority groups.

Therefore, Austria, Belgium, France and Germany and the other member states of the OSCE must respect and implement the provisions of these international instruments which fully guarantee the freedom of religion and belief of their citizens."[CDXXXVI]

The functioning of the France's anti-secte laws are as draconian as they sound. In English the official French law is entitled *"Reinforcing Prevention and Repression of Sectarian Groups'.* It is a transparent effort to rid France of unpopular or minority religious groups. The law uses vague terms that can be interpreted or misinterpreted as required. One such act criminalized is that which involves, *"any techniques which can alter judgment."* The language of this law could easily apply to practically any religious preaching, evangelizing, witnessing, proselytizing and even teaching. France's list of 172 'sectes' created by a *'Commission of inquiry'* included 7th Day Adventists, Scientologists, Jehova's Witnesses, Mormons, Baptists and others. For all intents and purposes Evangelism is a crime according to the French Anti-sect Law.

"Some churches were already considering removing the word "evangelical" from their names, the president of the French Protestant Federation (FPF), the Rev. Jean-Arnold de Clermont, said from Paris Thursday. Earlier this week Rep. Christopher Smith (R-NJ), the U.S. co-chairman of the Helsinki Commission - which monitors human rights in Europe - was quoted as saying he hoped the commission would investigate the new French law. "There is a very strong anti-religious bias that has emerged in Europe," he was quoted as saying. "If you're an evangelical, you are a nut." Commission spokesman Ben Anderson said from Washington Thursday the French law could well be the subject of debate at a parliamentary assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to be held in Paris in July. U.S. Congressmen will participate in the gathering."[CDXXXVII]

The French authorities targeted a Hindu based group known as the Aumist. Founded by a disciple of India's famous Swami Shivananda, the group was basically outlawed and disbanded by the intensive and draconian actions of the French anti-cult Police. The

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CDXXXVI **U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** *'U.S. Statement on Freedom of Thought, Conscience, Religion and Belief'* T. Geremy Gunn, September 23, 2008

CDXXXVII **Ibid.**

media '*exposed*' the Mandarom as a *'cultic concentration camp'*. Condemning the French followers of Swami Shivananda as a group with no foundation in true religion or tradition, a leading French psychiatrist, Jean-Marie Abgrall declared that '*notwithstanding what they claim, cults are not religious movements, but rather criminal movements organized by gurus who use brainwashing to manipulate their victims'*.

"The French Aumist Religion, whose legal structure is called the Association of the Triumphant Vajra, headquartered in its holy city of Mandarom (hence the popular nickname of 'The Mandarom'), is not only regarded by anti-cultists and by a sizeable part of the French media as a cult, it is a cult, particularly in southern France. This is, in itself, an interesting phenomenon. The Aumist Religion is not a very large group, with less than one thousand members in France and a smaller constituency in Italy, Quebec, Belgium, Switzerland and Africa. The holy city of the Mandarom-described as the very epitome of the 'danger of the cults' and a base threatening a whole country-does not include more than fifty residing monks. The Aumist Religion (the name comes from the sacred Eastern sound OM or AUM, the only common element with the Japanese Aum Shinri-kyo) has been founded by Mr. Gilbert Bourdin, a native of French Martinique. In the early 1960s he was initiated by the Indian master Sivananda and started gathering followers as an ascetic practicing austerities in Southern France. He also became quite well known as a Yoga teacher and author. The campaign against the Mandarom was largely organized by ADFI, and from 1992 it was joined by an ad hoc ecologist group led by Mr. Robert Ferrato. The latter claimed that the Mandarom disturbs the ecological equilibrium of the mountain where it is built, and called for its destruction. As mentioned earlier, anti-cult activists are taken more seriously in France than in other countries, and even an extreme character such as Dr Abgrall managed to become one of the two 'experts' in the national observatory of Cults established in 1996. The Mandarom was raided repeatedly between 1992-1995 by tax and police officers in a military style. ADFI, Mr. Ferrato, and a reporter for the TV network TF1, Bernard Nicolas, played a key role in making an apostate, Florence Roncaglia (whose mother is still with the Mandarom), 'remember' that she had been molested and raped by Bourdin in the 1980s. Based on Roncaglia's complaint, the Mandarom was raided again and Bourdin was arrested. Coincidentally, at the same date the French Council of State should have rendered its final decision on the question of building permission for the Temple-Pyramid. The decision was finally unfavorable to the Aumist Religion. For the Aumists, the fact that the Temple-Pyramid can no longer be built is extremely serious. They are also concerned with the climate surrounding the prosecution against their

leader. A local politician, Pierre Rinaldi, was also charged for alleged corruption for his support of the Aumists, in connection with the building of the road leading to the Mandarom." [CDXXXVIII]

In Switzerland, the head of a security agency was fired for merely being a member of a listed group. Another impact of the French '*secte*' laws was discrimination. Religious groups that were listed, were unable to rent hotel and conference facilities. Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in France were denied advisory status to the Government merely due to being one of the listed groups in the '*secte list'*.

Dr Massimo Introvigne gave a presentation to the US House of Representatives regarding Europe's increasingly sharp attack on religious liberty. Dr Introvigne is the managing director of the Turin, Italy based *Center for the Study of New Religions*. In his testimony to the US Congress he highlighted the activities of the '*secte reports'*. Active within every province of France, these agents have a vested interests in detecting and informing on so-called '*dangerous cults'*. In Germany, Catholic diocesan advisors play a similar role and directly act against other religious groups, whereas in Belgium, several Catholic groups are on the '*dangerous*' list. The UN, in its *'Concluding Observations of the UN Human Rights Committee'* recommended that Germany discontinue the holding of "*sensitizing sessions for judges against the practices of certain designated sects"*. In the current climate the right to a fair trial is denied for religious minorities. Such "*awareness*" programs for court officials have been condemned by the United Nations Human Rights Committee.[CDXXXIX]

Recognizing the threat to freedom of expression and religion, the *Institute on Religion and Public Policy* urged France and Belgium to honor their commitments to basic human rights.

"Both France and Belgium have also committed themselves to adhering to the principles of equal protection and non-discrimination in the administration of criminal justice as articulated in the 1990 Copenhagen Conference on the Human Dimension. Yet, the repressive measures implemented in France and proposed in Belgium contravene these commitments and the principles of non-discrimination and equal protection of the law which are at the heart of the rule of law. The time has come for France and Belgium to agree to full compliance with OSCE

CDXXXVIII **France's Anti-Secte Laws** Dr. Massimo Introvigne, Managing Director, Center for the Study of New Religions www.cesnur.org

CDXXXIX **United Nations Human Rights Committee** (CCPR/C/79/Add.73) November 18, 1996

(Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) principles and commitments regarding freedom of religion, non-discrimination and the rule of law."

The French anti-secte laws establish a regime disparaging to the principles of equality and non-discrimination at the heart of human rights. "*Awareness*" Sessions for Judges and Prosecutors against the practices of Targeted Religions have been instituted as well.

"Starting in 1996, training and "awareness" programs for the police, state prosecutors, judges of instruction and sitting judges were initiated. The 2005 Guide for Public Agents on Sectarian Deviations notes that each year the National School for Magistrates (Ecole Nationale de la Magistrature) organizes a one-week seminar on sects for prosecutors, judges, police officers, and government officials from the youth and sports ministry, national education, judicial protection of youth, general direction of competition and consumer offices. Up to 140 trainees take part in this course. The anti-sect magistrate at DACG runs these seminars together with an official at the Labor Ministry. In addition, the anti-sect magistrate also gives these seminars on sects to prosecutors and judges within the appeal courts. Along with the Circulars, these seminars and awareness programs improperly prejudice attendees against targeted faiths by providing biased stereotypes and unscientific information, and thus clearly violate human rights standards. Belgian officials have also lectured and participated in these seminars on "sects." Based on documents released under the Freedom of Information law, the presentations on the targeted religions have been biased. The seminars delivered to the judges have included specific briefings on Scientology, Jehovah's Witnesses and other targeted groups, with information provided by UNADFI and CCMM, and without any possibility of contradiction, debate or rebuttal by the concerned groups."[CDXL]

In Italy, Law 1159 had been instituted by Mussolini's Fascist Government in 1929. It is still in force. In the 1980s and 1990s the Italian government passed laws in orders, preventing Freemasons from holding positions in the National Judiciary or as Presidents, for instance of some of Italy's chambers of commerce. These laws are still in force. Mussolini's law 1159 has been successfully challenged in the courts. Law 1159 was originally developed in a concordat with the Catholic Church. This law identified the Catholic Church as the only legitimate religion in Italy. A mandatory Church tax was imposed on all citizens. This tax has been modified in recent times but it is still mandatory. Under the present system, all Italian citizens are obliged to pay this Church

CDXL **Institute on Religion and Public Policy**

tax. This tax which is also referred to as a '*Cultural Tax*' amounts to 0.8% of individual tax payments. Recently Italy took an portentous step towards the oppression of religion in the name of crime fighting.

"Italian police have set up a special task force of investigators and psychologists to fight the growing number of sect-related crimes, reports said on Wednesday. The new Anti-Sect Squad made up of 15 top investigators will reportedly cooperate in investigations nationwide on serious crimes involving drug use, embezzlement and murder. The phenomenon of sects, said Italian police chief Gianni De Gennaro in a document published Wednesday by Turin daily La Stampa "is more widespread than generally thought - it exploits the fragility, emotional turmoil and the ignorance of people, mostly the young generation, feeding a culture of hate and death." According to the international Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR) as many as 100,000 Italians have recently converted to new cults - with an estimated 1,400 affiliated to satanic groups..." [CDXLI] Many of these Italians now find themselves under the scanner of the Anti-Sect squad solely based upon their choice of religion.

In Germany tax payers who claim to be secular can abstain from paying the Church Tax. However in Italy, the religious tax payment is statutory. The law does allow for the tax payer to give their tax to non religious entities. If they leave it blank than the tax is spread out among the religious bodies which have elected to participate in the corresponding division. The Italian system still officially recognizes its long term concordat with the Catholic Church. The Government has otherwise made agreements with other religious groups through smaller concordats called '*intese*'. Yet the Catholic religion is the only religion taught in Italian public schools at public expense. All other religions are required to negotiate individual deals with the Government on a case by case basis. Attempts at easing these rules have met with resistance as being potentially beneficial to Islam. Italy's Law 1159 is still in force yet most of its directly anti-democratic aspects have been removed. Despite these changes, Hinduism as a religion remains unsanctioned and unrecognized by the Italian government. Spain is yet another European Nation that has a long standing concordat with the Catholic Church.

Other European countries such as Lithuania and Latvia have developed strict laws and freedom of religion is limited. In Lithuania the State has the sole power to change the status of a religion. The Government has developed a legal framework that entrenches

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CDXLI **AKI Adnkronos International** '*Italy: Police Set Up Anti-Sect Task Force*' December 6, 2006

certain religions while it marginalizes others. Lithuanian activist Donatas Glodenis noted that, *"In Lithuania the State has sole power to change the status of religious associations that are not, under current circumstances, perceived as partners. It is essentially a one-sided, top-down relationship. Even the traditional communities are not perceived in the LRCA (Law on Religious Communities and Associations) as partners to the State, but rather as a cultural heritage that should be preserved."*

In Latvia discussions between various minority religious groups and the Government went on for years. In the Czech Republic, the court denied a mother access to her 6 year old solely based on the fact that she was a Jehova's Witness. The mother was stripped of her guardianship. In Czech prison no provisions are made for religious based diets and pork fat is almost always exclusively used in prison cooking. Thus Jewish and Muslim prisoners can only observe their religious dietary practices by avoiding the cooked food.[CDXLII]

In Greece, a long battle has been waged between secular and religious forces. The Eastern Orthodox Church has succeeded in maintaining its official status as a virtual arm of the Government. To this day, Greek laws uphold the Eastern Orthodox Church as the official State Church. The Church monopoly has been challenged over the years without success. Greek modern antiproselytism statutes were established in 1844. This was largely due to the Greek Orthodox Church's effort to restrain foreign based Protestant groups. The politically powerful Eastern Orthodox Church frequently urges the government to enforce the anti- proselytism law and send missionaries to prison. The Hindu based International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) has been officially disbanded three times and its literature confiscated repeatedly. Currently, its members must function underground and disguise their efforts. Mandatory tenants of the tradition such as public congregational singing are banned and are punishable by law.

John Warwick Montgomery, (LL.M. (Cardiff), Ph.D. (Chicago), D.Théol (Strasbourg)Barrister-at-Law, England and Wales Senior Counsel, European Centre for Law & Justice and Professor Emeritus of Law and Humanities, University of Luton, England) in a paper entitled *'Greek Opposition to Evangelism'* revealed the state of religion in modern Greece.

CDXLII

"In the last quarter century, the Greek antiproselytism law has been used again and again to suppress religious views other than those of the established Church. The first substantial international opposition to such repression of religious freedom came by way of the Kokkinakis case, in which an elderly Jehovah's Witness, who had been arrested more than sixty times and convicted more than eight times for door-to-door proselytism, was criminally prosecuted for making the mistake of trying to convert the wife of an Orthodox priest while the priest hid behind a door a took notes! The Strasbourg Court completely exonerated the applicant on the facts but refused to declare the Greek law incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. In law, the prosecution observed that the Greek antiproselytism statute was good law in Greece, and simply fleshed out the undefined but explicit prohibition against proselytism enshrined in the Greek Constitution. To question its validity would be to question the Constitution itself. The statute in its present form is not discriminatory (though sunder the Colonels' regime its application was limited to convincing or attempting to convince Greek Orthodox to leave their church, the existing version totally bans improper proselytism, regardless of the religion involved). Moreover, the law is explicit in its definition of proselytism: "By 'proselytism' is meant, in particular, any direct or indirect attempt to intrude on the religious beliefs of a person of a different religious persuasion, with the aim of undermining those beliefs, either by any kind of inducement or promise of an inducement or moral support or material assistance, or by fraudulent means or by taking advantage of his inexperience, trust, need, low intellect or naivety" (Law 1363/1938, as amended by Law 1672/39). Three Greek Air Force officers, D. Larissis, S. Mandalaridis, and I. Sarandis, all of Protestant Pentecostal persuasion, were cashiered by the Permanent Air Force Court of Athens for violating the antiproselytism statute and thereby not conducting themselves as officers and gentlemen. They were convicted of evangelizing fellow Air Force personnel as well as civilians. Subsequent appeals in military and civilian courts did little more than to affirm their convictions, though sentences were reduced. Ultimately, their cases were taken to Strasbourg by the present writer, where the (now defunct) Commission, and later the Court of Human Rights, decided that their Convention rights had been violated relative to the evangelization of civilians, but did not vindicate their evangelization of military personnel. The Greek government argued as to the Greek antiproselytism law that it was not inconsistent with the religious freedom guaranteed by Article 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights; that it in fact supported the Convention by protecting the religious rights of the weak and of those who were satisfied with their religious position and did not want to be importuned by other religionists; and that Article 9 of the Convention properly allows governments to restrict religious activity for the sake of public order

and the rights of others. Commentators have quite generally remarked that the European Court of Human Rights hesitates to upset the legal systems of the Member States, even when this would hardly result in a state's departing from the well-established and highly respected human rights club represented by the ECHR. In the Greek proselytism cases, this has meant that, whilst the Court has clearly tried to uphold freedom of evangelism in general by vindicating the applicants, it has refused to declare the Greek antiproselytism statute incompatible with the Convention, in spite of its patent ambiguities and provable chilling effect upon freedom of religious expression, and narrowed permissible evangelism to the minimum, restricting it in effect to "transactions among equals," even though it should be obvious that hierarchical and superior-inferior relationships are part of the very fabric of all societies and that to remove legal protection for evangelism in such contexts is to open a Pandora's box for religious repression and the discriminatory treatment of minority religious positions."[CDXLIII]

Historically, the Orthodox Church in Greece not only survived but triumphed over the Muslim-Ottoman Empire, and today's animosity between the Greeks and Turks has a powerful religious component. The Greek authorities have developed various frameworks for controlling its Muslim population. Recent plans to build a mosque in the Greek capital of Athens were scuttled as the government refused a permit for its construction. Greek government interjection into internal Islamic affairs has also blurred the lines between Church and State. The Greek government sentenced a Muslim leader to 112 months in prison on a charge of '*pretense of authority*'.

"The Muslims' most serious problem remains the choice of the muftis and of the continuous prosecution of one elected mufti. Currently, there are two muftis in Xanthi and two in Komotini - one appointed and one elected. The case of a conviction of the elected Mufti of Komotini was heard by the European Court of Human Rights in January 1999. Mehmet Emin Aga's prosecution is a serious case of violation of the human rights of an individual in Greece. He was elected Mufti of Xanthi in August 1990. In August 1991 the Greek government applied a new 1990 law abolishing the old 1920 one that called for elections of muftis. The government appointed Emin Sinikoglu as Mufti of Xanthi. Aga has been charged with violation of Article 175.2 of the Penal Code (pretense of authority) because he had issued 33 messages to the Muslims on religious holidays, signing them as Mufti of Xanthi. To this day, the First Instance Courts have convicted him to over 112 months imprisonment (the last conviction to 12 months

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[CDXLIII] **Greek Opposition to Evangelism** John Warwick Montgomery, CESNUR 2000 International Conference, Riga, Latvia August 29-31 2000

on 24 March 1999). Appeal Courts have reduced the sentences to some 70 months. Aga has spent six months in prison and has bought off the balance, at considerable financial cost. In March 1999 the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece announced a discriminatory monthly financial benefit only for Christian families with at least three children living in Thrace. Thrace is also home of Greece's Muslim population. This was done to combat the supposedly higher birth rate of the Muslims. The government did not react to this act."[CDXLIV]

Greece's Muslims are not the only religious minority to face persecution. Constitutional amendments introduced with a first parliamentary vote in 1998 did not affect the privileged status of the Eastern Orthodox Church. In January 1999 the European Court of Human Rights struck out of its list the appeal of a Jehovah's Witness plaintiff who had been under surveillance by the Greek state, following a settlement between Greece and the plaintiff (Tsavachidis vs. Greece). Greece, admitting the surveillance, promised that neither Tsavachidis nor any other member of that church ever be under surveillance again. However, Jehovah's Witnesses continue to face harassment. They are still summoned to police stations for "*identity checks*," face difficulties in burying their dead in the cemeteries, and in carrying out legal building works.

Despite the European Union's castigation of India for its alleged persecution of its religious minorities, the Europeans track record is one of extreme intolerance. In comparison, India's minorities enjoy privileges far beyond the purview of its Hindu majority. While the Europeans theoretically represent religious tolerance and liberal progressive idealism, in practice they are in no position to lecture India. While European religious minority groups struggle under the weight of their government's aggressive anti-secte laws, the religious minorities of India are protected by vast institutionalized governmental agencies that guarantee them rights not available to a majority of Indians. Strikingly, Indian minority groups thrive under the government's protection and privileges whereas European minorities, for all intents and purposes, are voiceless. While India's religious minority, specifically it's Christian and Muslims, are constitutionally empowered and protected, India's Hindu majority suffers.

In India, anti-conversion laws were developed in response to the aggressive and predatory tactics of well funded Christian organizations. Careful not to impede the free practice of religion, the laws targeted fraudulent conversion based upon bribery,

[CDXLIV] **International Federation of Human Rights** (Human Rights Bureau Germany) '*Greek Muslims*' www.menschenrechtsbuero.de/pdf/ihf30sep1999.pdf

inducements and other dishonest tactics. As the European laws were developed to suppress the natural growth of alternate religions, the Indian laws were designed to stop the abuse of religion. India was not alone in recognizing the dangers of fanatic Christian evangelization. Sri Lanka, Thailand and Cambodia have also responded to the challenge. Like India, these countries recognize the dangers represented by well funded foreign based Christian organizations. Taking advantage of the poverty stricken condition of the people, the missionaries basically bribe the people into becoming Christians. In other words, the conversions are based solely upon material considerations. In a prosperous India, Christian conversions would be rare. Recently the Cambodian government was forced to ban Christians who were taking advantage of people's economic desperation.

"Cambodia has banned Christian groups from door-to-door proselytizing and is seeking to limit other religious activities by non-Buddhist organizations, which it says disrupt society. Christian missionaries are reportedly offering cakes and other sweets to children in exchange for abandoning Buddhism, local media said. Food, clothing and free English lessons are also offered by many church groups, which then introduce religion into their activities. "It is prohibited to use money, materials and other means in order to convince followers of a religion to convert to another one," the ministry directive said. The groups' tactics "disturb the daily lives of the people and can cause other insecurities in society," it added."[CDXLV]

Elsewhere in Azerbaijan, police raided Baptist services in Baku. Several Azeri Baptists were imprisoned on Soviet-style charges and several foreign Baptists were expelled. The response was drastic as individual human rights clashed with Azerbaijan's established hierarchical structures.

Europe's anti-sect laws have developed in an age when millions of Westerners have adopted new and in many cases Eastern forms of religion. The anti-sect and anti-cult laws are a partial response to this phenomenon. There have been a handful of actual cults that were prominent for either racketeering crimes or acts of mass suicide. Yet in general, European anti-cult laws were designed to protect and reinforce the age old traditional and religious cultural institutions of the people. This is reflected within both the legislation and the implementation of the laws.

[CDXLV] **China Post** '*Cambodia Bans Christian proselytizing*'

In Greece, the Government has prosecuted Christian evangelists over the years. In the last 30 years, the Greek antiproselytism law has been used again and again to suppress religious practices other than those of the established Eastern Orthodox Church. Both the cultural sensitivities of the majority community and the challenge posed by aggressive proselyzation are reflected in the various charges.

"Greek Courts have held that certain individuals were guilty of proselytism when they compared the Saints to "figures decorating walls", Saint Gerassimos to a "body stuffed with cotton" and the Church to "a theatre, a market, a cinema", when they delivered a sermon by demonstrating a picture showing a multitude of unhappy people dressed in rags and when they said that "this is how they are all those who do not accept my faith". (Court of Cassation, Decision No.271/1932, Themis XVII, page 19), when they promised to orthodox refugees to give them shelter under particularly favorable terms if they adopted the faith of Uniates (Court of Appeal of the Aegean, Decision No. 2950/1930, Themis B, page 103), when they offered a scholarship for studies abroad (Court of Cassation, decision No.2276/1953), when they sent to Orthodox priests pamphlets with the recommendation to read them and to apply their contents (Court of Cassation, decision No. 59/1956, Law Tribune 1956, No.4, page 736), when they distributed "so called religious" books and prospectuses free to "uneducated peasants" or to "young pupils" (Court of Cassation, Decision No. 201/1961, Penal Chronicles XI, page 472) or when they promised to a young seamstress to improve her position if she abandoned the Orthodox Church whereof the priests were accused of exploiting society (Court of Cassation, decision No 498/1961, Penal Chronicles XII, page 212). More recently certain courts convicted some Jehovah's Witnesses on the grounds that they proclaimed the doctrine of their sect "with importunity" and because they accused the Orthodox Church that it constituted "the source of troubles for the people" (Court of Appeal of Thessaloniki, decision No. 2567/1988), that they entered other houses being covered by the name of Christian who desires to propagate the New Testament (Misdemeanor Court of Florina, Decision No.128/1989) and that they tried to distribute books and booklets to an Orthodox priest inside his car after having told him to stop (Misdemeanor Court of Lassithio, Decision No357/1990)."

India's anti-conversion laws, in comparison, do not tread on the promotion and free practice of any religion. Rather than suppressing choice and freedom of conscience and the free practice of religion, Orissa's anti-conversion law reinforces actual conversion as lawful. By providing a legal framework that validates every conversion, the law, if followed, would go far towards the stabilization of Orissa's social foment.

For the Love of Dog

"I worship the Cow and I shall defend its worship against the whole world. The central fact of Hinduism is cow protection. The Cow is the mother to millions." Mahatma Gandhi [CDXLVI]

Many observers and commentators have attempted to portray Hindu efforts at cow protection as an assault upon human rights. In fact it is this commitment by the Hindus that is often twisted into '*proof*' of the fascist nature of the Hindu activists. It is distorted into an issue of minority religious persecution. Despite beef eating having no authentic role in the religious functionality of either Islam or Christianity, attempts have been made to portray the Hindu ban on cow slaughter as an assault upon freedom of religion. In the Old Testament of the Bible which applies to both Christians, Muslims and Jews in Issaih, chapter 66 verse 3 we find: *He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man. He that sacrifices a lamb is as if he slit a dogs neck, he that offereth it as an oblation is as if he offered swines blood, he that burneth it as incense as if he blessed an idol. Yea they have chosen their way and their soul delighteth in their abominations.*

Islamic scholars aver that Islam gives no compulsive directive for killing of cow either for religious or mundane purposes. Bahadur Shah 'Zafar', after regaining Delhi in 1857 for a brief interlude, made the killing of cow a capital offence. Bahadur Shah was not the first Mughal king to make such a proclamation. As recorded in his famous firman of 1586, Akbar too completely forbade cow slaughter throughout his empire. Babur may have been an ardent Ghazi of Islam, but he, in his letter dated 935 Hijri, advocated his son Humayun to stop cow slaughter in India. Then Emperor Jehangir promulgated an order that on Sundays, when Akbar was born, and Thursdays, when Jehangir ascended to the throne, no animal should be sacrificed. Even bigoted Aurangzeb always refrained from making cow-sacrifice during Bakr-Id. We are also aware how in Maharaja Ranjit Singh's kingdom the only crime that had capital punishment was cow slaughter. Regardless of the claims of some, cows are fundamental to India and its survival. India's ancient cow culture is integral to Indian civilization. Beyond the cultural and meta-physical, Hinduism's Cow Culture is based upon both practical socio-economic sustainability issues and good old common sense.

"The National Commission on Cattle, presided over by Justice GM Lodha, recently submitted its recommendations to the Union Government. The report, in 4 volumes, calls for stringent laws to

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[CDXLVI] **Compilation Of Views Of Mahatma Gandhi On Cow Protection** ANNEX II (6) Paragraph 9.3

protect cow and its progeny in the interest of India's rural economy…Agricultural is still the mainstay of India's economy - cow breeding and cow preservation are integral to it. 75 per cent of Indians live in villages and derive the greatest benefits from cows and bullocks. Despite the compulsions of modernism, tractors are not suitable for Indian land holdings unlike in the US and the UK. In US the land available to each person is around 14 acre; in India it is around 0.70 acre. A tractor consumes diesel, creates pollution, doesn't eat grass nor produces dung for manure. So for Indian conditions, ploughing is still ideal. Even Albert Einstein, in a letter to Sir CV Raman, wrote: "Tell the people of India, that if they want to survive and show the world path to survive, then they should forget about tractor and preserve their ancient tradition of ploughing."[CDXLVII]

The Hindu use of cow dung and urine is an example of ancient humanity's many well known medicinal discoveries such as yoga, acupuncture, massage, herbal medicine and martial arts.

"An enterprising practitioner of traditional Indian medicine has opened a unique clinic that treats all ailments with cow urine and dung. Cow urine for common cold, dung for diabetes, a concoction of both for cancer -- it's all there in Shyam Sunder Aggarwal's clinic in the crowded Barabazaar neighborhood. Modern drugs are not allowed here. The indigenous health center, which is how Aggarwal describes his clinic, is never lacking patients, most of who are unlettered and superstitious. The cow medicines come as liquid or powder or pills in vials or small, medium, large bottles. "We have neglected cows for far too long. But now the efficacy of cow urine and dung is proved by research," points out Aggarwal, who will shortly open another clinic in the city. Aggarwal, like all practitioners of traditional medicine, claims that cow refuse has the power to cure cancer and AIDS. "The benefits of cow refuse are immense. It's a divine gift which is being neglected." The healing properties of cow dung and cow urine are mentioned in ancient Hindu texts. Aggarwal says cow urine alone could cure hundreds of diseases -- kidney malfunction, diabetes, asthma, heart conditions, digestive problems, obesity, infertility and many more. The skeptics don't believe him. The National Medical Forum says, "The medical community does not subscribe to this kind of home grown therapy that has no proven quality." But traditional medicine received an impetus after the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) developed a product containing cow urine. The product is said to increase the activity of antibiotics and anti-cancer agents while increasing the absorption of bioactive

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[CDXLVII] **Pioneer** August 15, 2002 and mothercow.org '*Cow Protection Means Good Ecological & Economic Sense*'

molecules. Aggarwal says the feedback from his patients is "tremendous." He says all the medicines are "sterilized" and some even flavored."[CDXLVIII]

The practical and beneficial place of the Cows and Bulls is reflected within ancient Hindu lore. The ancient text the Mahabharata or '*Greater India'* has always been recognized as '*Itihas*' or history by a majority of Indians. There are many incidents of the '*fantastic'* and mystical. Despite this most people accept that the core story is based upon real historical figures, places and events. The entire geography of India reflects the Mahabharata. India's entire sense of mythos is firmly planted within the Mahabharata. Within popular culture politicians are compared to various Mahabharata characters. As in the West, naming of cars, space rockets and weapon systems are frequently named after its ancient heroes and gods.

Recently several astronomical occurrences mentioned within the Mahabharata have been verified as scientifically accurate.[CDXLIX] The basic fundamentals of the geography, astronomy, cultural identity and the written word all signify the historicity and the integral place the Mahabharata has for Indians. To the Hindus throughout history, the Mahabharata has been much more than a history book. It has been recognized as a blueprint to life. It has all facets of human psychology and drama. Most importantly it has, at its center, the essence of human duty and ultimately transcendence in the form of the Hindu Bible known as the Bhagavad Gita or *'Song of God'*. These direct teachings of Lord Krishna's to his friend Arjuna have inspired Hindus for many millennia. Like every other aspect of life, the Mahabharata illustrates the valuable role of cows to society and the planet.

"One should never show any disregard for cows in any way. If evil dreams are seen, men should take the names of cows. One should never obstruct cows in any way. Cows are the mothers of both the Past and the Future. Cows have become the refuge of the world. It is for this that cows are said to be highly blessed, sacred, and the foremost of all things. It is for this that cows are said to stay at the very head of all creatures. Every morning, people should bow with reverence unto cows."

"The sacrifices are all established upon them. It is by sacrifice that Soma (nectar) is got. Sacrifice has been established upon cows. (For without ghee or clarified butter, which is produced from

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CDXLVIII **SADA News** *'Clinic promises mother of all cures - cow urine, dung'* July 8, 2002
CDXLIX DATING THE *KURUKSHETRA* WAR S. Kalyanraman
www.indicethos.org/Astronomy/GreatBharatawar.html

milk, there can be no sacrifice). The gods become gratified through sacrifices. It is from the cows that the means have flowed of the sustenance of all the worlds. They yield Soma (nectar) in the form of milk. Cows are auspicious and sacred, and grant every wish and are the givers of life."[CDL]

Obviously the Hindu view of the Cow is based upon an intimate relationship between the sacred and the practical. We as humans need the cow. When the relationship is harmonious and mutually beneficial, it is the basis for all around sustainability and self sufficiency. The current economies based upon cow slaughter are manifestly unsustainable.

*User of more than half of all water used for all purposes in the U.S.: **livestock production***
*Amount of water used in production of the average cow: **sufficient to float a destroyer***
*Gallons of water needed to produce a pound of wheat: **25***
*Gallons of water needed to produce a pound of California beef: **5,000***
*Years the world's known oil reserves would last if every human ate a meat-centered diet: **13***
*Years they would last if human beings no longer ate meat: **260***
*Calories of fossil fuel expended to get 1 calorie of protein from beef: **78***
*To get 1 calorie of protein from soybeans: **2***
*Percentage of all raw materials (base products of farming, forestry and mining, including fossil fuels) consumed by U.S. that is devoted to the production of livestock: **33***
*Percentage of all raw materials consumed by the U.S. needed to produce a complete vegetarian diet: **2*** [CDLI]

Bovine flesh is not required for human consumption. The fact that there are billions of healthy people who live without beef makes this a self evident fact. Looking at India's cow culture from the holistic perspective, one can see that the cow and its place within a society is a kind of barometer for gauging the humanity and sustainability of a civilization. Here stands a large harmless, defenseless animal that provides rare protein rich milk in exchange for plentiful grass standing in the road. Bulls, for water and grass alone, use their massive bodies to pull and plow the earth thus increasing grain production. Humans have always had a choice; kill them or honor them.

India is not the only ancient culture to prohibit beef eating. We find in the ancient Greek records mention of this. Interestingly, Beef eating and cow slaughter were prohibited in

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[CDL] **Mahabharata** *'Anusasana Parva'* Sections LXXXIII - LXXVII - LXXVI
[CDLI] **Diet for a New America** *'Your Health, Your Planet'* John Robbins 1991

Ancient Egypt. In his book ***Euterpe***, Herodotus reveals that the Oracle of Ammon enforced an abstention from beef upon all peoples in the Nile area. …"*being of opinion themselves that they were Libyans and not Egyptians, and also being burdened by the rules of religious service, because* ***they desired not to be debarred from the use of cows' flesh****, sent to Ammon saying that they had naught in common with the Egyptians, for they dwelt outside the Delta and agreed with them in nothing; and they said they desired that it might be lawful for them to eat everything without distinction. The God however did not permit them to do so….*"[CDLII]

Herodotus also says in regards to animal sacrifice, "*the cows however they may not sacrifice, but these are sacred to Isis;* and "*..and all the Egyptians without distinction reverence cows far more than any other kind of cattle." Herodotus continues, "In the same manner as they bury the oxen they bury also their cows when they die; for about them also they have the same law laid down, and these also they abstain from killing.*"[CDLIII]

Indian politicians, out of synch with the Indian ethos claim that Hindu Cow protection advocates are bent on enforcing Hindu Dharma on everyone. A government minister I met during a visit to Arunachal Pradesh stated *"Eating Beef is good for you. So why should Hindus try to outlaw beef?"*[CDLIV] The fact is Beef is not necessarily good for you. When asked as to why society should support massive slaughter houses for the unnecessary gratification of the tongue, he did not respond. When the same point was raised with Atul Jog of the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (VKA) he replied that, *"There is a difference between a tribal hunting for personal need and massive industrialized animal slaughter. We are against that. Hindus never have and never will force tribals to change their beliefs. Rather, we encourage them in the preservation of their cultures."*[CDLV]

Leftist academics and political theorists depict the Orissa Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1960 as being deployed against Muslims and the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967, against Christians. Rather than attacks against anyone, the laws were enacted for the benefit of cows, Hindus and the integrity of the conversion process. Cows are integral to neither Islam nor Christianity yet are an essential feature of the Hindu cultural identity. A Muslim discomfort with the Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act does

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CDLII **EUTERPE** '*Herodotus' Histories Book II*' pg. 18
CDLIII **Ibid.** pg. 41
CDLIV **Author Interview with Arunachal Pradesh MLA** Seppa, Arunachal Pradesh January 2, 2004
CDLV **Author Interview with Atul Jog,** Tejpur, Assam September 11, 2008

not supersede a Hindu citizen's heritage and time honored traditions. In the purview of the anti-BJP lobby, the sensitivities of the non-Hindu citizen supplant the human rights of the Indian Hindu.

Gazing through their prism of negativity and prejudice the obvious escapes them. The laws were designed not as attacks against anyone but rather as defensive mechanisms on behalf of Hindus and cows.

There is a certain self denial involved when Westerners criticize Hindu's commitment to Cow protection. Rather than an alien concept we see a reflection of the Hindu's sacred cow in the West love of dogs, cats and horses. Newspaper exposés on the slaughter and consumption of dogs and cats in Asia have repeatedly outraged European and American sensibilities. A recent nationwide campaign against a French corporation's horse slaughter garnered massive support across the USA. Massive full page advertisements appeared in major newspapers urging people to contact their legislators to pass a law banning horse slaughter. This activism led to the closure of nearly all horse slaughter facilities in the entire country. The March 2008 killing of a puppy in Iraq shook Americans and shocked America's political and military establishment.

"The United States Marines Corps on Tuesday condemned a video that purportedly shows a Marine viciously mistreating a puppy and promised an aggressive investigation into who is responsible. Sources at the Marine Corps base in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, told FOXNews.com that they were upset and outraged by the video, which was initially posted on YouTube but has since been taken down. In the grainy, low-quality clip, the Marine appears to throw a puppy off a rocky cliff while joking with another Marine, who addresses him by a single name as he holds up the motionless black-and-white dog before hurling it into a gully. It was likely that the named man and others were being questioned in the case, sources told FOXNews.com. Those at the base in Hawaii were very upset by the video. "We're all outraged," a source said. "We're probably more outraged than the general public. I hate that it happened." Earlier Tuesday, the base's public affairs director issued a statement denouncing the vignette. "The video is shocking and deplorable and is contrary to the high standards we expect of every Marine," said Major Chris Perrine. "This video came to our attention this morning, and we have initiated an investigation. We do not tolerate this type of behavior and will take appropriate action." Soon after the uproar started Tuesday, YouTube removed the video from its site on the grounds that it violated content rules — though it was still accessible and available via other links online. "Certainly there's a lot

of outrage and a lot of people are upset about it. I think every Marine is upset about this video," Perrine said. "We will investigate and take appropriate action and make sure our Marine is safe as well."That is mistreatment of a puppy. That is a violation of anybody's standards, and the Marine Corps sets extremely high standards."[CDLVI]

Americans across the nation were outraged by this display of cruelty towards animals. Condemning the brutality of the act, thousands of concerned citizens signed petitions urging the government to respond. The Marines in question were eventually punished severely in recognition of America's love for dogs. Recently the theme of Iraq and puppies found itself, once again, into the consciousness of the American public. American soldiers, on-duty in Iraq, have bonded repeatedly with the dogs of Baghdad. As the US military initially resisted allowing soldier's adoption of stray dogs, Americans once again signed petitions by the thousands. Eventually, the military, recognizing America's love for dogs, permitted the adoption of stray dogs. An entire organization has been created specifically for the rescue and protection of the dogs of Baghdad.

"Rescuing a Baghdad puppy' The family of a Fort Carson soldier in Iraq will soon celebrate two homecomings: one for Sgt. Daniel Schaefer and one for their new puppy Pacino. "We're just so excited trying to get this little guy over here," said Shay Schaefer, wife of Sgt. Daniel Schaefer. Sgt. Schaefer rescued a dog that was being beaten by teenagers in Baghdad. It was bloodied and wounded. He nursed it back to health on base. "The dog needs him and he needs the dog," said Mrs. Schaefer who has been working from the United States to bring the dog home. An organization called Baghdad Pups will fly the dog to Colorado. Mrs. Schaefer says Pacino probably wouldn't survive if it were turned loose in Baghdad, where dogs run in packs and are often abused. "It's a death sentence for him. In Iraq they don't consider dogs pets," said Mrs. Schaefer. Next month they'll celebrate the two homecomings and a friendship that not even war can separate."[CDLVII]

"Army Spc. Gwen Beberg has been reunited with Ratchet, the puppy she bonded with after saving him from a burning trash pile in Iraq. Beberg returned to her Minneapolis home on Saturday after being stationed in Kentucky since she returned from Iraq. She and another soldier rescued the then-4-week-old puppy in May and an animal rescue group arranged his trip to

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CDLVI **Fox News** '*Marines Outraged by Puppy-Throwing Video; Investigation Heats Up*' March 4, 2008

CDLVII **KOAA.COM** '*Rescuing a Baghdad Puppy*' January 10, 2009

Minnesota in October. The dog stayed with Beberg's parents until her return. The soldier calls Ratchet her "fuzzy little love" that always lifts her spirits."[CDLVIII]

The Westerners love and sense of humanity is symptomatic of natural compassion. It is based upon ideals of basic decency and humanitarianism rather than a sense of mysticism and a conscious relationship with the sacred. In a similar manner, the people demanding the enforcement of the anti-cow slaughter laws are, in actuality, defending the very essence of Indian civilization. Ignorant of the vital role of cows, Leftists and Corporate media attack activists for their commitment. The Hindu bond to the cow represents a holistic and wholesome approach to the human-animal relationship. It has developed over countless millennia into an authentically symbiotic union between mankind and the animal world. To this day it remains at the center of Indian society. The Cow is at the foundation of India and is the means by which India's massive population thrives. The Hindu or Vedic Cow Culture allows humans to leave a gentler footprint upon the environment and harmonizes with the natural world. As over 85% of India's people subsist upon agricultural a majority of them depend upon the Cow.

Since the independence of India, the famines, that were a regular feature of British rule, have become a thing of the past. It is the humble cow that feeds India. As civilizations rose and fell, Asia's Indic societies remained stable and prospered from a foundation based upon its dependable and productive bovine based economy. Hinduism's Cow Culture provides the vital underpinnings for a self sufficient and self reliant India.

In a world of cultures condoning and thriving upon cow slaughter, one people have chosen to protect them. To begrudge the world this one example of humanitarianism towards cows, is to begrudge us of our gentler dispositions. As violence overwhelms the world, it is time we reduce the violence at the core of our slaughter house based economies. Baba Radha Mohan of Govardhan, India pointed out that, "*The incredible violence involved in modern animal slaughter is absolutely negative. The subsequent fear hormones flood into the meat. When eaten, there is bound to be a negative reaction. What you eat is what you are. So the violence of unnecessary animal slaughter is bound to impact society."*[CDLIX] Mankind's compassion is challenged for its lack of love for cows. Many a Hindu aspires for a world in which human compassion will evolve beyond its love of dogs.

[CDLVIII] **Centre Daily Times** *'Soldier reunites with Rachet: 'Fuzzy little love'* January 17, 2008
[CDLIX] **Author Interview with Baba Radha Mohan** Govardhan, Uttar Pradesh November 14, 2008

Behind the Guns

As the news of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati's murder spread, a majority of people held the Christians responsible. Within hours of the incident, the administration announced the Maoists as the killers. This was not, as believed, based upon mere speculation. A letter from the Maoist Kotgad group was indeed discovered less than 24 hours after the killings. The letter claimed responsibility for the crime and warned of more to come. The Kandha leader Lambodhar Kanhar was specifically mentioned as being marked for death. Despite this evidence, the many anomalies at the site raised doubts as to the Maoist theory. The media led the way in discrediting the Maoist angle as did various Hindu organizations. Taking into account the past attacks on Swamiji, it appeared obvious as to who was behind the attacks. The Swami's long term battles against fraudulent conversion and cow slaughter had brought him into the crossfire of the powerful Christian lobby. He was attacked on multiple occasions and it was common knowledge that every attack had been at the hands of the Christian extremists. Thus as the news of the killings swept the State, suspicion instantly fell upon the Christians.

Acts of violence against the Christians soon followed. Hindu organizations such as the VHP, RSS, BJP and Bajrang Dal were instantly blamed for the violence. Hindus were convicted and condemned based solely upon the allegations of Pana Christians. The media jumped upon these claims and broadcast them around the world. Images of fanatic Hindu extremists on the rampage were flashed around the world. Assumptions and theories were presented as verifiable facts. This has been the media's version of the Kandhamal reality. Sifting through the evidence we find a very different story.

Who killed Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and his students and who was behind the violence that followed?

In short the Swami appears to have been killed by a conspiratorial alliance of Pana Christians and the Maoists. The mayhem that followed was a combination of spontaneous outrage and organized violence perpetrated by both the Kandhas and the Christian Panas. The Kandhas, under the leadership of Lambodhar Kanhar went on the warpath. The Christian Panas under the leadership of R. K. Nayak and others engaged in an equally brutal campaign.

Ashok Sahu, the former DG of Police for the State of Arunachal Pradesh uncovered direct evidence of the conspiracy to kill the Swami. *"Shri Sahu revealed that there was a meeting at Raikia community centre on the 9th august 2008 attended by many Christian militants representing NGOs and persons like Nakul Nayak the ex-member of parliament and Krishnapad Seth the ex-chairman of the block from Tumudibandh. The conspiracy to kill Swami Lakshmananda was hatched in the meeting. On the 13th august a threatening letter was circulated to the district and State authorities along with copies to the individual targets including Swamijee. On 22nd August Swamijee appealed in writing addressed to the District Magistrate to enhance his personal security. The news that his life was in danger had been broadcast by the media in the morning hours, but alas he was done away with in a well planned cold blooded murder by that evening, in his own room."*

Ashok Sahu was to uncover more details regarding the plot to assassinate Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. As he attended the funeral of Swamiji, Ashok Sahu was one amongst thousands of attendees. As he stood there an unknown person approached him and said, *"I have seen you on TV and trust you. I want to give you these important documents which I know will be useful to you."* The man stated as he handed him some documents wrapped in a red cloth. Busy with the memorial services, Ashok Sahu didn't open up the documents until he was travelling to the airport the next day. As he opened them he was stunned. The documents were in the Oriya language and appeared to be the minutes to a conspiracy hatched by Orissa's Christian leader to eliminate Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. He was even more stunned when he realized that these were not mere copies but the actual original documents with the signatures of several well known Christian and political leaders. Recognizing the import of the documents, Ashok Sahu contacted the police and the Chief Minister of Orissa. The Chief Minister requested a Xerox copy of the documents. Ashok Sahu held a press conference with the original documents on display. After the press conference, Ashok Sahu handed the documents over to the police for further investigation. Initial forensic investigations confirmed that, prima facae the signatures were genuine. The documents were handed over to the Police Crime Bureau and sent on for further forensic tests headed by Inspector General A.K. Roy. Deputy Superintendent of Police S.K. Patnaik, who is heading up the Swami's murder investigation, added the documents to the case files.

ଅଧିବେଶନ ନଂ - ୧୦

ସ୍ଥାନ - ବେଟିକଲା
ତାରିଖ 25-5-08
ସମୟ 11.AM.

ଅଦ୍ୟ ତା- 25.5.08 ରିଖ ଦିନ ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନ 11 ଘଟିକା ସମୟରେ - ବେଟିକଲା ଗ୍ରାମ ଧାର୍ମିକ ମଣ୍ଡଳୀ ଗୃହରେ ମହିଳା ଦଳ ଓ ଯୁବସଂଘ ବୈଠକ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା। Rev. Fr ପ୍ରଫୁଲ୍ଲ କୁମାର ନାୟକ ମହାଶୟଙ୍କ ସଭାପତିତ୍ୱରେ ସଭା ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା।
ଶ୍ରୀ ବିଭୂତି ପ୍ରଧାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ପରେ ସଭା କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରା ଯାଇଥିଲା।

<u>ସ୍ୱାଗତ ଓ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ</u>

ଧାର୍ମିକ ସାଧାରଣ ସଂପାଦକ ଶ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରଫୁଲ୍ଲ କୁମାର ନାୟକଙ୍କ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟ ସଦସ୍ୟା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଶ୍ରୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ଦେଇ ସ୍ୱାଗତ କରାଇଥିଲେ। ତା ପରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ସଭାର ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରା ଯାଇଥିଲା।

<u>ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ସଦସ୍ୟା ସଦସ୍ୟ</u>

1 Prafulla Ku. Nayak
Ranjeet Kumar Nayak
ସୁବାସ ନାୟକ
ସାରଳା ନାୟିକ
Kaumadini Digal
Kamalini Nayak
ମାନ୍ତିଲତା ପ୍ରଧାନ
ସୁଲୋଚନା ନାୟକ
ମାର୍ଗ୍ରୀଟ ପ୍ରଧାନ
Helena Mallick
ସୁବିନ ମାଝି
Vidya Sagar Nayak (Bhaneswar)
Gopal chandra naik
Ajit Kumar Pradhan
Bijaya ch. mallik
Srikrama Pradh...

ଗତ ସଭାର [illegible] ସଂପାଦକ ମହାଶୟ ଶ୍ରୀ-
ପ୍ରଫୁଲ୍ଲ କୁମାର [illegible] ଗତ ସଭାର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟବିବରଣୀ ପାଠ କରି
ଶୁଣାଇଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ତାହା ଠିକ୍ ଥିବାରୁ ସର୍ବସମ୍ମତି କ୍ରମେ
ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା ।
ଏହାପରେ ନିମ୍ନଲିଖିତ ବିଷୟରେ ଆଲୋଚନା କରି ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନିଆ
ଯାଇଥିଲା ।

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ନି:ନଂ – 2 [illegible] ତା: [illegible]/୮/୨୦୦୮ [illegible] ସ୍ଥିର କରାଗଲା ।

ନି:ନଂ – 3 [illegible] [illegible] ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନିଆଗଲା ।

ନି:ନଂ – 4 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନିଆଗଲା ।

ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ପରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ [illegible] ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ [illegible] ସଭା
ଶେଷ କରାଗଲା ।

ପାଣି ପଞ୍ଚାୟତ
ସଭାପତି

ପାଣି ପଞ୍ଚାୟତ
ସଂପାଦକ

The literal English translation of the telling Resolution passed in Oriya language is given here below.

SESSION # 10 Place: Betikala, Dated: 25.5.08 (May 25, 2008), Time: 11 A.M. This 25th day of May, 2008, 11A.M., a general body meeting of the Council was held at the Betikala Catholic Abbey. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Rev. Fr. Prafulla Kumar Sabhapati. After the prayers by Sri Bikram Pradhan, the proceedings of the meeting unfolded. Welcome and Registration of Attendance General Secretary of the Parish Council, Sri Prafulla Kumar Nayak extended Christian greetings to all members present. Then, the names, signatures and attendance of all members present were recorded in their own handwriting, on the Register.

Members Present

1. Rev. Fr. Prafulla Kumar Sabhapati - Chaired the meeting

2. Prafulla Ku. Nayak

3. Ranjeet Kumar Nayak

4. Subash Nayak

5. Saula Nayak

6. Kaumudini Digal

7. Kamalini Nayak

8. Shantilata Pradhan

9. Sultana Nayak

10. Mahadev Pradhan

11. Helena Mallick

12. Subal Nayak

13. Dayasagar Nayak (Praneswar)

14. Gopal Chandra Naik

15. Ajit Kumar Pradhan

16. Bijaya Ch. Mallik

17. Bikrama Pradhan

Confirmation of minutes of the last meeting General Secretary Sri Prafulla Kumar Nayak read out the record of proceedings of the last meeting, and the contents being approved, it was unanimously confirmed.

After this, there was brainstorming on the following issue, and due decisions taken:

Decision No.1 -As per the direction/command of our Bishop, it was resolved to sacrifice Lord for his pleasure within coming 3 months, the Satanic activitists (Saitaani Kaaryakalaap) that stand opposed to the expansion of the Work in all the abbey circles of our Parish.

Decision No.2 -For the pleasure of the Lord, in order to successfully execute the said Decision No. 1, the timing was chosen to be the 23rd day of August, 2008.

Decision No. 3 - It was also decided to conduct Christian victory celebrations in all the Abbey circles of the Parish, after the successful completion of the said given task.

Decision No. 4 - A Committee was formed to manage with precision all the said given tasks. It was decided that on this Committee would be there the Baptist Abbeys of the Christian family and all the key functionaries of the Good News Diocese. After prayers, the meeting ended with Christian greetings extended to all participants. Sd/Fr. Prafulla Kumar Sabhapati President, Parish Council Sd/Prafulla Kumar Nayak General Secretary, Parish Council"

In original Oriya language & handwritten Oriya script which original document is also formally signed by the Parish Council Chairman Rev. Fr. Prafulla Kumar Sabhapati and the General Secretary Shri Prafulla Kumar Nayak. Copies of this document have been filed with the authorities concerned for due action.

Follow-up meetings:

A second meeting was held at Raikia (Kalumaha) Church on August 09, 2008 at 2 pm. Nearly 150 people attended it. They decided to bring out propaganda material to mobilize Christians, the Christian world and the pseudo-seculars against Swamiji, his Service activities, his cause of robust nationalism and anti-conversion work.

As noted earlier, the Christians held a third meeting at Padangi Church on August 14, 2008. Twelve potential Christian mercenaries attended it for briefs. It also included three Christian CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) personnel. Suspicious villagers had apprehended some of their vehicles, noted their license plate numbers. A TATA-407 vehicle with plate number OR08D-0675, YAMAHA MOTORCYCLE plate number

OR 12A-0353 a HERO HONDA PASSION bearing No. OR-12-3235. When the concerned citizens handed them over to the police, the Christian police officer did not take cognizance and let them off.

As accounts of the alleged plot were disclosed by the Hindu Jagaran Samukhya and VHP, Orissa's Christian leadership rejected the documents as a forgery. The media announced that the Archbishop Cheenath had filed a lawsuit against the Hindu Jagaran Samukhya charging them with defamation and slander. This news was published throughout India as a fact. However no such lawsuit had ever been filed, rather the Church had merely announced that they intended to file a lawsuit. Despite the fact that the Archbishop had only announced his intention to sue over the documents, the media went a step further and declared that the lawsuit had been filed. The media announced the filing of the lawsuit as if it were a done deal. The intended impression was that of an innocent and confident Church fighting back against yet another Hindu conspiracy. The nonexistent lawsuit was a bluff and had no credence beyond its propaganda value.

As violence swept across Kandhamal, the Government of Orissa issued an official request for assistance from the Central Government of India. The Congress controlled UPA Central Government refused to cooperate. The State of Orissa was subsequently obliged to file a petition with the Courts. Only after the Judicial branch ordered the Central Government to provide assistance, were peacekeeping forces sent and funds allocated towards the State's requests. As the media and Congress slammed the Naveen Patnaik administration of inaction the Central government refused to provide the required manpower and funds. This fact has been ignored by the many voices allegedly clamoring for the rule of law. The UPA Central Government's refusal to provide the requisite and essential tools for the restoration of law and order is indicative of its intention to discredit Orissa's State government. As the RSS/VHP/BJP and other Hindu activists are pilloried as the aggressive force behind Kandhamal's bloodshed, this verifiable act of India's Congress UPA administration is disregarded. Rather than rising above partisan politics, India's Congress ruled UPA administration vindictively abused its power. One can only wonder how many lives and homes were sacrificed by this caustic act of partisanship.

During the tragic Bihar floods of August-September 2008, thousands died. As news of the crisis spread around the world, the Government of Taiwan attempted to contribute US$ 50,000 to the State of Bihar. Unfortunately, the UPA Central Government

authorities refused to allow the transfer of the funds. Flabbergasted, the Government of Taiwan contacted a National Executive member of the RSS, Ram Madhav, in an attempt to surmount the obstreperous and obstructive stance of India's Central government.[CDLX]

Once again we find that India's Congress Party leadership ruthlessly sacrificed the lives of the people upon the altar of partisan politics. These two incidents illustrate the destructive partisanship at play within India's Congress led anti-BJP coalition. Yet these verifiable incidents of near-criminal obstication have been expediently overlooked by the squawking chatterbox set.

This same faction has repeatedly cast dispersions against the many evidences confirming the involvement of a Christian-Maoist nexus in the murder of Swami Lakshmananda. Suspicion of this involvement, however is beyond question. Both the Pana Christians and the Maoist recognized Swami Lakshmananda as a major impediment to their ambitions and agendas for the region.

" In a major breakthrough the Orissa police today claimed that the mastermind behind VHP leader Lakshmananda Saraswati's killing had been identified as a group had hired the Maoists to execute the crime. "Maoists were given money to train certain youths of a particular community to eliminate Saraswati," Inspector General (IG) of Police, crime branch, Arun Ray told PTI asserting the mastermind of the killings had been identified. Stating the mastermind had fled Orissa, the IG said "we will trace them soon." The plan to eliminate Saraswati was made immediately after the December, 2007 communal violence in Kandhamal, he added. Elaborating the probe by the crime branch, he said investigations also showed that a group had collected money from some villages in Kandhamal which was given to the Maoist group to train their youths for the purpose. At least 60 youths were given arms training by Maoists, the IG said dwelling on the inputs from three arrested persons. Ray said members of a particular community were unhappy with Saraswati and held him responsible for the riots which took place during Christmas in 2007. They requested a Maoist group to assist them in killing Saraswati, he said. Confirming that six Telugu-speaking persons fired at Saraswati and others, the crime branch investigation revealed that the trained groups were guarding the ashram at Jalespeta in Kandhamal during the incident. Refusing to divulge identity and religion of the mastermind behind the killing which sparked communal violence in Kandhamal, IG said Maoists only executed the crime. While the motive behind Saraswati's killing was clear, the sleuths gathered

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[CDLX] **Incident took place during Author Interview with Ram Madhav** New Delhi, India September 6, 2008

evidences against people who planned the crime not realizing that it would trigger such a large scale violence, he said."[CDLXI]

Kandhamal represents a unique political phenomenon. In their extremist zeal to counter the rising influence of the BJP and the indigenous consolidation of the Kandha tribes people, the diametrically opposed forces of the Christians and the Maoists have abandon their foundational principles. The Christians, the alleged followers of the *'Prince of Peace'* Jesus go on the warpath; the Maoist, the alleged opponents of capitalism have embarked upon a path of financial opportunism having sold their murderous talents to the bidding of the Christian Panas.

Both the Pana Christians and the Maoists have the motivation for killing Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati. The Pana Christians recognized in Swamiji an obstacle that not only empowered their Kandha enemy but also threatened the growth of their lucrative trade in liquor, sacrificial buffaloes and conversion enterprises. For the Maoists, the Swami had become a major impediment towards their planned '*liberation*' of Orissa. The Swami cultivated a sense of national allegiance and cultural unity amongst the tribes people of Kandhamal. Such an outlook is a direct negation of the social ferment feeding the Maoist insurgency. As the Kandha turned their fury upon the Maoists, in Swami Lakshmananda they found an alternate inspiration and a credible cause. The removal of the Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati became necessary for he had become a major obstacle on both the local and national level. The Maoist agenda required the establishment of Kandhamal as a base of local operations and as a key and vital link within its declared *'liberated zone'* stretching from the borders of Nepal down to South India.

"Those familiar with the region say a strategic motive rests behind the attack. So far, the Maoists, who have established a presence in half of Orissa's 30 districts, have failed to make inroads in Kandhamal. Here, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Swami Lakshmananda acted as unexpected buffers between the rebels and tribals, says Sujeet Kumar, who runs Kalinga Kusum Foundation, a non-governmental organization that is trying to nurture young rural entrepreneurs in Kalahandi, one of Orissa's most backward districts, neighboring Kandhamal. The Hindu nationalist RSS has been working with the Kandha tribal majority here—setting up vanvasi kalyan or tribal welfare ashrams, schools and medical

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[CDLXI] **Press Trust of India (PTI)** '*Maoists were hired to kill Laxmanananda:Police*' October 16, 2008

centers— to prevent tribals from converting to Christianity. In the process, it achieved an unintended result and became a barrier to Maoist entry in the area. "When you work for the tribals, they trust you and bond with you," says Kumar. And while the non-religious Maoists are an anti-establishment group waging a violent war against the Indian state, "the RSS is a solidly establishment organization rooted in Hinduism". "It is the ideological opposite of the Maoists. And this is the organization that the tribals here are close to. The Maoists are not able to bond with tribals because of this affiliation," adds Kumar. Lakshmananda had a formidable following among the tribals, said Krishnan Kumar, the collector of Kandhamal. The murder of Lakshmananda, locals say, helped remove the Maoists' main obstacle between them and the tribals. It also consolidated their popularity with the largely Christian Pano community. "We are not sure what the Maoists plan to do next," said a government official in Kandhamal, on condition of anonymity. "Normally, they exploit social fault lines and generate a sense of relative deprivation. I think they plan to do that in Kandhamal." Officials privately admit that Kandhamal risks turning into a Maoist stronghold. "We have not discussed these issues and all these questions need to be deeply thought about. There is no point speculating, but understanding this change is becoming very important," said Sinha, the deputy commissioner of police in Cuttack."[CDLXII]

While ignoring and denying the violent criminal culpability of the Pana Christians and justifying Maoist brutality, a new mythology has been fashioned. All acts of violence were branded as the work of VHP/Bajrang Dal activists. Without a shred of evidence, allegations were presented as proven fact. Foregoing basic justice and any sense of fairplay, Hindus are condemned merely for being who they are. The propaganda war against them has been skillfully waged to such a point that guilt is presumed merely based upon hearsay. As the media indicts and convicts Hindu activists, prejudice and bias are reinforced. These prejudices are shamelessly spouted by many otherwise fair-minded individuals.

Looking at the evidence allows us to ascertain the '*on the ground*' reality. Personal agendas and bias act as obstacles towards discovering the truth. The first truth regarding Kandhamal's violence is that with or without the VHP/Bajrang Dal, violence has long been endemic to the region. The recent violence is not a new phenomenon. Rather it is the latest phase in an ongoing long term cycle of violence that has

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CDLXII **Livemint.com** '*A potent cocktail inside the state fuels the rebels*' Kandhamal, Orissa October 30, 2008

repeatedly swept the region. The latest violence, as in past incidents, is based upon a Kandha response to repeated provocation. While the media muddied the waters and intentionally misdiagnosed the trouble as a religious conflict, the reality was much different. In the first week of October 2008, over 200 Pana homes were burnt to the ground in the Boudh district. They had been targeted by the Kandha, not because they were Christians but because they were Pana homes. The 200 homes belonged to a community of Hindu Pana. In the war between the Kandha and Pana, religious identity has always been irrelevant. In this battle conversion has served to exasperate their mutual antipathy and has sharpened the divide between the two communities. The Hindu Pana have unfortunately been lumped in and targeted as along with their Christian peers.

By the end of 2008, the focus of the police investigation centered on the Pana Christian leader Radhakanta Nayak. Media reports alleged that the police were preparing a case for his arrest.

"The BJD-BJP government in Orissa is closing in on Congress Party's Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament) member and former civil servant Radhakanta Nayak for his role in the conspiracy to kill Lakshmananda Saraswati. Sources say that Nayak, the most high-profile Christian political leader in the State, may be arrested shortly. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has said that the plot to kill Lakshmananda Saraswati was hatched in the presence of Nayak. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of Orissa police is said to be preparing a case against Nayak and his Christian missionary supporters. Though CID officials refused to comment whether they considered Nayak as one of the suspects, they said: "The mastermind has been identified and he is now out of Orissa." 81 year old Saint Saraswati and four of his associates were gunned down by 30-odd assailants carrying sophisticated weapons at his ashram in Jalespeta of Kandhamal district on the evening of August 23. It led to one of the worst communal conflicts in the history of the State. The people of the State believed the Saraswati killing was a revenge attack. An attack on the Swami's vehicle in Kandhamal in December 2007 had sparked off a wave of violence in which three people were killed and several houses gutted. The Sangh Parivar, it is believed, called off its Christmas Bandh based on the assurances from the government that Christian missionary Nayak would be arrested. "It was one of our demands and we have been given to understand that the process is on," a senior BJP leader said. CID Inspector General of Police Arun Ray said the murder of Saint Saraswati was the result of a conspiracy hatched soon after the December 2007 riots. "It was a thoroughly professional job.

The initial plan was hatched by someone else. The actual planning to kill Swami Saraswati was done by a separate group while another group trained the group of killers. One group did not know what the other group was doing. Our challenge is to link up the evidence and present a case before the court that would lead to convictions," said Ray. The police have already arrested seven people, including some Maoists, for the murder." [CDLXIII]

As in the past, unable to find redress for their woes, ignored by the administration and outraged at the brutal murder of their patron seer Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, , the Kandha responded with violence.

"Peace will not return to the district until and unless land rights of tribals and the issue of fake caste certificates obtained by non-tribals is resolved by the government. Tribal land has been grabbed by non-tribals in the district and benefits meant for them have been cornered by non-tribals who managed to obtain fake certificates." Mr. Kanhar who had led the tribals (Kandhas) in the district during the December 2007 movement and had organized a successful three day Bandh warned of another tribal mobilization soon. Mr. Kanhar said that he too had received letters threatening him of dire consequences in recent times." [CDLXIV]

After more than a month of violence, efforts were made to restore the peace. The State Administration, desperate to put an end to the violence, began negotiations towards peace. Recognizing the speciousness of the daily and continuous cacophony of accusation against the VHP/Bajrang Dal, the administration entered into peace negotiations with the Kandha leadership hoping to discuss a path towards the restoration of peace.

In mid-October, after nearly 2 months of violence, the Kandha leader, Lambodhar Kanhar gave the government one month of peace before he resumes his anti-Pana campaign. *"In a room in Phulbani, the district headquarters of Kandhamal, Lambodhar Kanhar, the chief of the Kandha tribals, is not biding his time. He is happy. He has led a long campaign targeting Dalits. He is looking forward to the consequences. 'The Panos, the dalits, are criminal by nature. Initially, they helped the tribals. But when the number of Panos started increasing, they began cheating us,' says Kanhar. He says the tribals were furious when a letter, supposedly written by the Maoists, was released a day after Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati's killing. The letter said the Maoists would kill Kanhar as well. "My people got agitated. They decided to snatch what was theirs. Finally, the administration came to me and asked me how to stop the violence. I told my people not to attack now. We have done what we want to do. Nothing*

[CDLXIII] **New Indian Express** '*Net closes in on Congress MP for Orissa Swami's Murder*' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa December 27, 2008

[CDLXIV] **Statesman News Service** '*Top Christian leaders hold meeting*' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa September 18, 2008

will happen now. I can give it in writing that my men will not set fire to churches anymore.' But peace is only for a month. Kanhar says he is waiting to see how the government implements its promises. 'For a month, it will be quiet,' he says. By then, the government should have 10 police officers investigating cases of fake certificates listing the dalits as tribals, eight new tehsils should be created, a B. Education college for tribals should have been opened, special land courts ought to have been set up to investigate land grabs by Christian Panas, and 500 tribals should have been recruited as constables. That is a tall order."[CDLXV]

In an interview with the Press Trust of India, Chief Lambodhar Kanhar stated, *"I can assure in writing that the tribals will never go for violence again as the state government has announced a good package for Kandhamal."*[CDLXVI]

In a discussion with the Chief Minister of Orissa Lambodhar Kanhar confirmed that he was calling the shots, *"Regarding anyone suspected of participating in the violence, rather than raiding and arresting them, give me a list of their names. I will turn them over to the police."*

Regardless of the efforts of the media and politicians to portray the violence as a religious conflict instigated by the VHP and other Hindu activists groups, the administration understood the reality. As pressure mounted upon the Naveen Patnaik administration and his opponents clamored for President's rule, he took steps towards the restoration of peace. In order to succeed in this effort, the administration was required to negotiate with the genuine perpetrators, organizers and participants in the violence. Consequently, the State Government of Orissa approached Lambodhar Kanhar, Chief of the Kandha tribes people of Kandhamal. As negotiations proceeded and solutions provided, peace gradually returned to the district.

The Zilla Parishad is a local government body at the district level in India. The people who make up these governmental bodies are at the forefront of the local political scene. They have their fingers directly on the pulse of their constituencies. They understand and are familiar with the various pressures and issues at hand. The opinion of the local Zilla Parishad is integral towards the development of a precise and proactive approach towards problem solving. In this regard, the opinion of the Kandhamal Zilla Parishad is quite edifying.

[CDLXV] **Tehelka Magazine** Volume 5 Issue 41 October 18, 2008
[CDLXVI] **Press Trust of India PTI** *'Tribals seek CRPF withdrawal, assure no violence in Kandhamal'* October 14, 2008

"Non-utilization of funds and tardy progress of developmental activities coupled with corrupt practices is considered to be one of the main reasons for the discontent in troubled Kandhamal district. Despite claims of the state government in terms of having focused itself on such activities, dispatched senior bureaucrats etc, the fact remains that progress of work is extremely slow. A review meeting held a fortnight ago showed that development activity has been barely making any progress. Contractors are not coming forward to execute any work. As many as 30 packages were put to tender, but failed to woo contractors.

Only 66 tube wells were installed as against a target of 320 by the end of December, 2008. Non-availability of rig machines and absence of stone crusher machines were said to the reasons behind delay in work. The other side of the problems dogging this violence torn district cropped up at the Zilla Parishad meeting held here recently. The parishad was shocked at the large scale violation of circulars and instructions relating to purchases. Right from purchase of school uniforms to beds, blankets, stationery, some of the officials had ignored the purchase policy and procured from unregistered suppliers and fake institutions, alleged the parishad members. These officials have disobeyed the instructions and circular of the district collector that purchases need to be made from registered dealers only.

"Registered dealers and Mahila Sangathan should get priority in supply of such articles," said Mrs. Sakuntala Mallick, president of the ZP in her letter to the district collector.

Mr. Khageswar Kanhar, a tribal leader and ZP member said that an impartial probe should be conducted and stringent action taken against officials who were involved in such corrupt practices."[CDLXVII]

No mention is made of the VHP, the Bajrang Dal, the BJP or the RSS. The Zilla Parishad recognizes that Kandhamal's debilitated infrastructure aggravates the potential for conflict. Economic development provides opportunities for both Kandha and Pana, Hindu and Christian and any differences could be settled in an amicable manner. The Zilla Parishad officials have correctly identified the crucial and underlying problems plaguing Kandhamal. Without a doubt, the injustices and outright criminality of some is the immediate source of the trouble, yet there can be no doubt that a prosperous Kandhamal would have little room for malcontents.

In the opinion of Ajayanti Pradhan, Congress MLA Representative, from G. Udayagiri, the Kandhamal violence is rooted in the past. Stressing the example of the 1994

CDLXVII **Statesman News Service** '*Kandhamal turmoil: Blame it on officials*' Phulbani, Orissa January 13, 2009

bloodshed, she told that in the year 1994 there was also a bloodshed she affirmed that if the government had taken the appropriate steps, the crisis would have been avoided.[CDLXVIII]

On October 20th, The State Government of Orissa filed an affidavit with the Supreme Court which clearly underscored the key contributing factors to the violence. Land alienation, reservation benefits and religious conversion were explicitly highlighted.

"…the Orissa Government on Monday submitted before the Supreme Court that the genesis of the violence lay in the "age-old ethnic divide and discord between the Kandhas (a Scheduled Tribe) and Panas (a Scheduled Caste) in the state". In response to a petition filed by the Archbishop of Cuttack, the Naveen Patnaik Government said, "There are long standing disputes between the Kandhas and Panas on issues arising out of land alienation and certain other perceived discriminations. The Kandhas perceive and nurture grievances that large number of Panas have illegally usurped their rightful entitlement of reservation benefits under the ST category by illegally claiming ST certificates." The submission before the apex court is on the line of what the Chief Minister had said at the recent National Integration Council meeting in New Delhi. While speaking about the clashes, he had referred to the "conflict of interests between the two communities," apparently giving a clean chit to Bajrang Dal activists, who are alleged to be behind the attacks on Christians. The affidavit by Tarun Kanti Mishra, principal secretary, Government of Orissa, also blames "religious conversions" for being instrumental in the outbreak of violence. "The ethnic divide between the Panas and Kandhas got accentuated on religious lines due to conversion of large number of Panas to a different religious community". According to the affidavit, it was in this backdrop of "mutual distrust and animosity" that the peace was shattered by the brutal murder of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati."[CDLXIX]

As for the allegations and accusations that squarely place the blame upon various Hindu organizations? Despite the popularization of this theory, there is not, nor has there ever been any evidence to substantiate this hypothesis. Hearsay, unsubstantiated accusations and theories make good news-copy but should have no influence in the court of law, thus the repeated attempts to outlaw the Bajrang Dal have failed. Such a move could only be accomplished by the contravention of India's legal process and by the abandonment of democratic principles.

CDLXVIII **Justice on Trial Kandhamal Fact Finding Mission** Kandhamal Root Cause, February 7, 2008
CDLXIX **Express News Service** *'Orissa Govt blames violence on Kandha-Pana Discord'* New Delhi, India October 20, 2008

In a classic example, reminiscent of George Orwell's *'Animal Farm'* the public debate presumes the validity of the allegations against the BJP/VHP/RSS as fact. Thus rather than debating the guilt or innocence of the Hindus, the debate is intentionally focused upon the need to protect India and its minorities from the '*known*' dangers of rising Hindu fascism. The alleged fascistic nature of the BJP has never been established. By cherry-picking various RSS sources and taking quotes in isolation of events, the opponents of the RSS distort the message of Hindutwa. They basically use the RSS's own statements to condemn the RSS. The entire basis of the anti-RSS/BJP ideology is based upon two key components; misinterpretation of the RSS's own philosophy and the allegations of its political adversaries. In a strange irony these adversaries rely upon the RSS sources in an attempt to discredit the RSS. Yet the various and innumerable statements of the RSS that debunk these very allegations and claims are not considered as factual. To put it simply, they declare their interpretation of the RSS as the reality whereas the RSS's own opinion of itself is considered invalid.

A case in point is the RSS concept of the Hindu identity. They twist the Hindutwa ideal of Hinduness into a caricature of the racial doctrines of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Again we see the application of fraudulent presumptions being bandied about as legitimate concern. According to RSS doctrine, a Hindu is anyone born of Indic ancestry. Regardless of one's religion if you are an Indian you are a Hindu. Indian Muslims are Muslim Hindus as Christians are Christian Hindus. Rather than a religious identity, Hindu refers to anyone born in the land known as Bharat or India. Such an all inclusive broadminded and tolerant outlook is uncommon and is the need of the hour.

Various commentators have asserted a fascistic label to theRSS/BJP/VHP based upon several factors, out of context quotes regarding Hitler, the fact that the RSS was founded in the early 1920s during the era of Mussolini, by the stated commitment to Nationalism or even by the khaki shorts worn by the RSS cadres. Using this same kind of logic, the entire modern world can be labeled as fascist. The modern highway systems, Television, the rocket sciences, jet propulsion and the popular Volkswagen '*love bug*' have their roots in Germany's National Socialists (NAZI) administration of Adolf Hitler. Ironically, the famous VW '*love bug*' automobile which achieved massive popularity, specifically amongst the 1960s counter culture, was designed by Adolf Hitler. Even the name of Volkswagen or '*People's Car*' was applied by Hitler. Despite this history, none would attempt to portray a rocket scientist, driving a VW on a modern highway on his

way to catch a flight, on a commercial jet, as a Nazi. Hitler was also the first politician to make use of airplanes in his political campaigns. Applying the circular logic of India's alleged progressive secularists, any who make use of the tactics or technologies developed by the Nazis is a Nazi. In reality, the fascist tag is bandied about by Leftist extremists in order to discredit its political opponents and electoral rivals.

Discredited by their lack of vision and held in low esteem by the masses, India's Leftists are desperate. As the rise of the politically aware Hindu reaches a threshold, India's secular and Leftist partisans are in a panic. Unable to convince the Nation of their vision and ability to govern, they are depending upon their ability to demonize their political rivals. Short of ideas, with a deficit of vision and out of synch with the Indian ethos, Congress and the Communists are banking upon the political ruination of the BJP. This is their ticket to power.

Solutions

The district of Kandhamal has long been in a dismal state. With the highest infant mortality rate in the entire Nation and a dismal economy, the district is plagued with problems. The development indices are abysmal. Per capita income for the district is Rs 4,743 a year; doctor availability is 23 and the number of hospital beds, 63 for a population of one lakh. The Human Development Index for Orissa shows Kandhamal in the 29th place for gender development, in the 30th place for reproductive health and 23rd in education. Orissa has 30 districts. The incidence and persistence of poverty is high in Southern Orissa, which comprises Kandhamal, Gajapati and Koraput, Balangir, and Kalahandi (KBK) districts. The State Per Capita Income is way below the national average. The gap between the State Per Capita Income and the corresponding National Per Capita Income is increasing at an alarming rate.

It is not that no efforts have been made as is generally believed. The solutions are many and available and many dedicated and patriotic individuals have responded to the challenge. As a matter of fact, if these solutions were implemented, Kandhamal would flourish.

The first and foremost item on the agenda must be enforcement of the court orders in regards to land alienation. The pandemic abuse of tribal and caste certificates has long aggravated tensions between the Kandha and the Pana. A major step was taken in this direction in January 2009.

"The state government has constituted state and district level committees to check caste certificates and take necessary action against those who had availed any benefit on the basis of fake caste certificates. At the state level the director of SC/ST Welfare Department, Mr. RK Choudhury will head the committee while at the district level, cells will be created with a senior police officer heading them. The committee and cell has been empowered to elicit public objections, issue show cause notices and also institute criminal cases. It can also impose a fine and recover the money from people who had availed financial benefits by furnishing fake caste certificates. It may be noted here that the steps taken by the state government is in line with a guideline issued at the national level following a verdict of the apex court, said officials here. The issue of fake caste certificates has gained significance in Orissa following the Kandhamal turmoil during which a section of the tribals were up in-arms alleging that several non-tribals had managed to obtain fake ST certificates by virtue of which they had cornered jobs and other such benefits."[CDLXX]

In the long term, education represents the foremost solution to Kandhamal's woes. The word education is derived from the Latin word 'educase', meaning to nourish. This is a clear indication of its fundamental value to any society. Some credit the wise Chanakya with the statement, *"If you are planning for a year, build roads; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate the people"*

Characteristically, India's media, being out of touch with the Indian ethos, disparaged the State and people's commitment towards the development of a thriving educational system.

As the Kandhamal violence ended in mid-November, permanent solutions were sought as provocateurs disclaimed. For instance, the National print publication, *Mint* and *livemint.com*, exclusive partners of *The Wall Street Journal* ran a frontpage editorial which denounced the goal of '*a school in every block of the district*' as a '*a delaying tactic*' or an '*excuse*'. In terms revealing a complete lack of understanding regarding law and order, the editorial entitled '*Orissa's excuse*' slammed the State Administration's far-sighted educational efforts.

"Orissa wants the Union government to help it with a series of developmental measures that it claims will provide a long-term solution to the problem of communal violence in the state's Kandhamal district. The idea is, at best, a delaying tactic and, at worse, an excuse. The state

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CDLXX **Statesman News Service** *'Drive against fake certificates'* January 23, 2009

wants the Union government to set up a campus of the National Tribal University at Phulbani, the headquarters of the Kandhamal district. It also wants a school in every block of the district. There is a long list of other demands as well. These are worthy developmental goals, but they have little to do with communal violence, a problem that requires immediate attention. Clearly, by linking these demands to the problem at hand, the state government is admitting its failure to control and curb violence against Christians. This, in any case, is a charitable view of things. And the possibility that the Orissa government has been less than keen to douse the communal fire for political reasons can't be ruled out. Stopping violence is an issue of law and order. It has nothing to do with setting up schools."[CDLXXI]

The argument made is that seeking a long term solution to a current problem is an admission of failure. That is a way of looking at it, no doubt. However, to not attempt to solve the crisis is the real failure. Education is the ultimate proactive course of action. Rather than a failure, Naveen Patnaik's administration is functioning altruistically and enacting good governance. In consideration of the future stability of Orissa, he is investing his current political capital. His current government benefits not from the long term solutions he seeks. The people of Kandhamal, the State of Orissa and thus India will, however, reap the reward.

The article, typically makes no mention of the brutal assassination of a beloved local leader whose numerous meetings and cultural programs were frequently attended by crowds numbering 30 to 50 thousand. Just perhaps his murder and that of his students along with the murder of the headmistress of a well known girl's school may have a way of stirring up a people.

Desperately clinging to its calumnious crusade designed upon the maxim of Nazi ideologue Joseph Goebbels, *"Repeat a lie a thousand times and it becomes the truth"*, the media has become a major hindrance towards peace and stability. As the media repeatedly condemns any and all courses of prudency and reason, the focus remains upon the limited outlook of biased politicians. Education represents a reasonable and sound course of action towards resolving the stymied socio-economic conditions prevalent in Kandhamal.

Despite the misrepresentation of Orissa as a social backwater, the State is home to a thoughtful, productive and proactive populace. Every facet of the human condition has

[CDLXXI] **Mint** 'Orissa's excuse' November 19, 2008

its anguish yet it also has its potential for fulfillment. The topic of education is no exception. Kandhamal educator Raghunath Rath, of Baliguda, in a study entitled *'Education of Tribal Children in Kandhamal District',* has provided an insightful and well thought out blueprint for the revitalization of Kandhamal's ancient role as a place of learning.

"Schools were also set up for ST and SC students by Tribal Welfare department of Government of Orissa after independence. The dream of Hon'ble Thakar Bappa the first residential school of Orissa of Tribal Welfare Department was opened at Nuagam of Kandhamal district in the year 1947. Later many schools were set up by welfare department in this district. There are 11 and 4 High Schools and 6 and 1 M.E. Schools from class I to VII for boys and girls respectively exclusively for ST and SC students. For primary education there are 9 residential and 88 non-residential Sevashramasin the district under the management of Welfare Department in the year 2003-2004. In 2003-04 education year 3280 boys and 820 girls are reading staying in hostels of residential schools, while 6415 boys and 4415 girls are getting their education in non-residential schools managed by Welfare Department in the district.

The Tribal district of Orissa is far behind from the national and state literacy rate. So is the fate of Kandhamal also. Tribal literacy rate with total literacy rate from 1961 to 2001 as per census reports of Kandhamal is as follows. The percentage of literacy of Kandhamal district could not compete with state average due to low-income level and backwardness of the people. This district having no industry at all and for which the main source of income of the people is cultivation and collection of forest products, the literacy rate of tribal people is unsatisfactory. So time to time committees, commissions and working groups were set up by Government of India to suggest ways to attain the goal. Those committees, commissions and, working groups recommended their well-thought, valuable suggestions for all-round development of education including Tribal and Backward classes.

The Government of Orissa also organized workshops, seminars, survey and evaluation. In the High School level, student enrollment increased with 2736 whereas six posts of teachers remained vacant in 2000-2001 then in 1996-97. In this period 12 more schools were opened. A High School serves about 29 villages and covers an area of 86.93 Sq kms. There is no increase of Colleges during 1996-97 to 2000-2001. Enrollment of 563 students were less in the year 2000-2001, but 21 posts of teachers were increased. A college serves about 229 villages and covers an area of 695.45 Sq kms. During 2000-2001 in primary level 14668 more tribal students were enrolled than in 1996-97, but in M.E. level enrollment was less by 419 tribal students within

this period. In High Schools, 1288 more tribal students and in college only 168 more tribal students were admitted during this period. It is ascertained from the above discussion that tribal student enrollment in comparison to total student enrollment is 55.92% in primary level, 45.09% in M.E.level, 45.51% in High School level and 29.39% in College level in the year 2000-2001. It seems that a big portion of tribal students are not going to M.E. level from primary level. Likewise most tribal students could not go for college education from high school level. This happens only for the socio-economic backwardness of tribals. Statistical figures are prepared basing on total district data. But the position is worst in the blocks like Kotagarh, Tumudibandha, Daringbadi and Phiringia.

There are no colleges in Kotagarh and Khajuripada Blocks. The family status and environment of tribals of Kandhamal district does not permit their children for education. Hence about 1/5 of the students of primary level are enrolling in M.E. level and above classes. Though in the year 2000-2001 enrollment was 53222 in primary level, in College level only 1228 tribal students were enrolled. This shows that in each level of school education drop out among the tribal students are numerous. The following table and graph will indicate the decline trend of enrolment. In my study I have already shown about the slow growth of education and educational institutions in Kandhamal District as well as the increasing trend in establishing primary schools. I have also seen that the educational institutions in primary level have increased resulting in increase in student's enrollment. The number of enrollment has decreased significantly in the later stages of higher education, which, in other hand speaks about the increasing drop out problem. There are certain important reasons for the drop out problem in the district. The first and most important reason is the prevailing economic backwardness. We know that majority of the people in the district are poor and who spend most of their times in doing small jobs and marginal farming, where children are also taking part. So financial difficulties create major hindrances for them for sending their children for studies.

Secondly, ignorance and superstitions play a major setback for spread of education in the district. People of the remote area are superstitious and addicted to blind beliefs. So they do not understand the value of education. Thirdly, a vital reason for the drop out problem of tribal students is their prevailing cultural process and life style, which hardly creates conducive environment for spreading of education. Some festivals like Kedu-Laka or Buffalo Sacrifice of Kandhas lasts for seven days and Anaka Puja of Kutia Kandhas continues for about a month in different villages of the area. The parents of the tribal students do not allow them to attend the school during that period. There are no specific Government sanctioned holidays for tribals of the

state to be observed by the educational institution unlike other communities enjoy. Hence tribal students remain absent in the school during their festive occasions, when there is no holiday. For this reason tribal students are lagging behind in studies from their non-tribal counterparts.

Another point for the drop-out problem is health. The poverty of tribal people doesn't permit them to keep clean their home environment. They don't get nutritious food. So tribal children often fall ill. The parents could not treat them timely due to economic scarcity. So they suffer for a long period. During suffering the child remains absent from school and after recovering from illness he loses his appetite for study. However there are few other reasons, which may also be responsible for drop-out problem of tribal students.

1. *The medium of teaching i.e., Oriya language is a foreign language for the tribal children.*
2. *Non-tribal teachers are posted to schools located at tribal areas, who are not aware of tribal cultural values.*
3. *Absence of tribal cultural and regional materials in class books.*
4. *The school environment does not attract the tribal students.*
5. *Some schools operate not having their own buildings*
6. *Schools having single teacher.*
7. *Teachers in interior pockets neglecting of their duties.*
8. *Irregular supply of mid-day meals.*
9. *Lack of communication facility.*
10. *Untimely supply of study materials.*

There are many other minor reasons for drop out of tribal students. If this type of process will continue and slow progress of literacy rate will prevail then the very purpose of fundamental right to education as per 86th amendment of Constitution will be defeated. The Constitution of India was introduced in 1950 and there was a pious aim to educate all children from the age group of 6 to 14 years by 1965. But it failed. Government from time to time fixed a target year for achievement of 100% literacy. Again, the year 2000 was targeted to achieve the goal. It was also unsuccessful. About 40 years have already been elapsed since 1965, but the goal is not attained. We have to again wait for at least 150 years to get cent percent result if the progress of tribal education will continue at the present rate. But it is a good sign that District Primary Education Project assisted by the D.F.I.D. has been launched in Kandhamal district since the year 2000. A survey was conducted in the year 2000 to identify children from age group of 6 to 14 by the D.P.E.P.

It reveals that there are 1,21,563 (boys-64655 and girls-56908) children are coming within the category, out of which 30916 (boys-15024 and girls-15992) are not admitted in to schools. There are no schools in 906 villages till 2003. Steps are being taken to set up schools and E.G.S. centers in D.P.E.P. program. Accordingly 57 primary schools and 549 E.G.S. centers in the said program are set up till end of 2003. Sarba Sikhya Abhiyana has also been introduced in the district from 15.08.2003. This program will continue till 2010 while D.P.E.P. program will be ended by 2007. But we should bear in mind that the survey conducted previously is not the end of the goal. Every year some children will attain the age of 6 and will be added to the previous survey. They should carefully be enumerated and should be taken in to account unless the very purpose of the above schemes will be defeated. If D.P.E.P. and Sarba Sikhya Abhiyana will be worked out whole-heartedly by every concerned it could be hoped that cent percent achievement could be achieved by 2010 in the field of education in Kandhamal District. To achieve the goal at a short span of time following recommendations may be adopted.

1. *Study books must be prepared in tribal language up to upper primary level.*
2. *Teachers from the same tribe and from the nearby villages if possible from the same village should be appointed.*
3. *There must be a school in each village.*
4. *More M.E. schools should be opened in tribal areas.*
5. *Every school must be well-equipped with all study materials.*
6. *Tribal students must be supplied with study materials and dresses free of cost.*
7. *Well constructed buildings must be provided to every school.*
8. *Teachers must be paid regularly with free accommodation facility in school campus.*
9. *Responsibility may be laid down to teachers for enrollment of all children from the age group of 6 to 14 years and not allow dropouts at any circumstances.*
10. *Each parent must be motivated to send their children above six years to school or teachers and parents may be legally bound to do this task.*
11. *All N.G.Os functioning in the district may be involved in the process to educate all children from 6 to 14 years.*
12. *Training at intervals to the Non-tribal teachers about the tribal culture and language should be provided.*

These suggestions may be introduced in a war footing manner and all concerned from parents, teachers to Heads of the district must work whole-heartedly to achieve cent percent education to

all children from 6 to 14 years within a limited span of time and bring a sea change in their society to bring the tribal in to the mainstream.

I may sum up with words of Swami Vivekananda- The only service to be done for our lower classes is to give them education; to develop their lost individuality, give them ideas-that is the only help they require and then the rest must follow as the effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, crystallization comes in the law of nature. Now if the mountain cannot come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him. This is true and has its relevance till the present day, which may be followed strictly."[CDLXXII]

On the Constitutional level the entitlement system is out of hand. India would do well to abandon its systemized identity based appeasement policy. As a government elected by all the people, India's leaders are equally bound to serve the needs of every citizen regardless of ethnicity, sex, language, caste or creed. All benefits must be made available to the entire citizenry based upon need and economic status. The current system is as impractical as a physician prescribing medicines based upon conditions other than a patient's health requirements. As things now stand, Minority-ism has become a kind of institutionalized elitism that has birthed an entire industry. Its stock in trade is the suffering of the very people it claims to represent. By streamlining India's Constitutional benefits to include any and all citizens, a majority of the current strife over the reservation system will vanish. Under such a system, both the Kandha and Pana, Hindu and Christian would equally avail of the opportunities presented.

One solution directly related to Kandhamal has been mooted that would empower the Kandha Tribals themselves to issue ST (Scheduled Tribe) certificates. This is a clear cut solution that would eliminate most cases of fraudulent tribal certificates. This prudent approach should be implemented immediately.

Minorityism is eating away at the social fabric of not only Orissa but of the entire country. The role of religious leaders within the minority lobby has been recognized as an irritant towards communal harmony. Former Indian Air force officer and India Christian Captain Johann Samuhanand observed, *"As one who had lived in Orissa for nearly 17 years, I found the Oriya people to be the most uncomplicated of Indians. My wife and I*

[CDLXXII] **Orissa Review** *'Education of Tribal Children in Kandhamal District'* Raghunath Rath May 2006

never felt any discrimination or insecurity during our 17 year stay. In fact, Orissa was tolerant of Muslims as well, as I know Dr Khan was a revered figure in our Chowdar area...When one Mr. John Dayal started frequenting Orissa and later became head of the AICC (All India Christian Council) and was appointed as a member of the Minorities commission, I could anticipate some sort of disaffection being created amongst Christians in India. He, as a member of the Minorities commission was not promoting brotherhood amongst all religions but was working as a sectarian leader and was promoting unethical issues such as reservation for Dalit Christians. Dr. Paul opposed reservation for Indian Christians offered in 1931 round table by the Indian National Congress. He proclaimed that the Indian Christians will work, die and live like their Hindu brothers in an Independent India. If today well known Indian Christians like Anthony, George Fernandes or Rajashekar Reddy are recognized as Congress or NDA leaders rather than leaders of merely one religious community of Christians; one must thank the vision of Mr. Paul." [CDLXXIII]

Religion is another Constitutional issue that has instigated much uncertainty and instability. Initially the word '*secular*' was not in the Constitution, being inserted in the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution. The entire idea of '*secularism*' has become a bludgeon against Hindu India. The State must not deny its citizens the right to practice as their religion requires, nor demand of them to do what their religion prohibits. A Hindu, Christian or Muslim remains a Hindu, Christian or a Muslim regardless of the secular identity of the administration. The fundamental basis of the separation between the Church and State is an implicit commitment to the non-interference in the faith or practice of any religion. If such religious behaviors are irreconcilable with the fundamental rights of the people or the authority of the State founded on the Constitution, only then is the government allowed to interfere.

Under India's alleged secularism, taxpayer funds are applied towards religious observances as millions of Muslims are sent to Mecca annually, Hindu beliefs are openly dismissed in school curricula, Hindu temples controlled by State governments and billions of pilgrim based funds are diverted towards non-Hindu ventures. Schools and institutions are government-funded merely for being of a certain religious identity. In short, Indian secularism is a distortion that could better be labeled as a national '*Hindu disinvestment'* policy.

CDLXXIII **Indian Christians** '*Response to Kandhamal*' Captain Johann Samuhanand September 6, 2008

Referring once again to Mahatma Gandhi, we find that India's modern secularists are out of touch with the Indian outlook on religion and public life. According to Gandhi, "*Those who say religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion is."* And *"A religion that takes no account of practical affairs and does not help to solve them is no religion."*

Conversely, perhaps because they do understand the role of religion in politics they are at the vanguard of the secularist drive against Hindu India. It is the expected tactic of those striving to supplant an existing authority. In India, there are many influential people dedicated to the establishment of a Marxist/Maoist based authoritarianism. Religion remains a primary target. In their view, religion, if practiced at all, should remain marginalized. The strident and pervasive disdain of the institutionalized '*secular*' lobby has created a new orthodoxy. They control what is taught and have power over the currency of wisdom. India strains under this burden. India would benefit by restructuring its Constitution to fit into the Indian context, that context is undoubtedly a sacred one.

The establishment of an Indian Christian Church with independent ecclesiastical authourity on par with the Church of England or the Vatican, would solve many of the current problems confronting the Church in India. As Indian Christianity predates most of Western Christianity this is a historically just and equitable solution.

As for the infrastructure, Kandhamal has been, plainly left far behind. India's famous railroad system does not include Kandhamal in its vast network. The regions many hills, gullies, rivers, streams and forests remain nearly as impenetrable as when the British first arrived. Its terrain played a major role in preventing any rapid response by the authorities, both past and present. Single roads that act as the economic arteries of the region are easily choked off. For all intents and purposes the region becomes almost inaccessible without the assistance of a massive helicopter fleet. The State authorities are thus often stymied in their ability to counter the violence.

Coincidently, as Kandhamal burned, Orissa was hit by the largest floods in over 60 years. Hundreds of thousands of people fled their homes as relief efforts went into overdrive. Miraculously fatalities were few. The National highway was submerged for days as many towns became islands of flood victims. Within this background, the State continued its peace restoration efforts. Snake catchers spent days capturing poisonous snakes as a precaution. Rather than taking advantage of the situation, the snake catchers

volunteered their services as a service to the community. This is a remarkable example of the evolved outlook of the average Oriya native. Rather than take advantage of the operation they refused payment. Such integrity bespeaks of a rare and genuinely humane mind-set.

All around development is the need of the hour but transportation concerns must be addressed without delay. Once again the people of Orissa have provided the answer.

Chitta Baral, Professor and Chair, Department of Computer Science & Engineering, Arizona State University has done an extensive-intensive study on the need of the expansion of the rail network in Orissa. He has been educating policy makers and the public in general about the importance of a good rail network. He has documented the current railway scenario in Orissa and prepared a blueprint for its expansion in the state which is mentioned in detail in the following paragraphs.

"Railways have always played an important role in economic development and rapid social transformation in all parts of the globe. It is one of the key economic infrastructures. However, it is most unfortunate that in a poor and backward state like Orissa, development of rail networks has received much less attention of the Central Government in the post-independence period. There are as many as seven districts like Boudh, Kandhamal, Deogarh, Nayagarh, Kendrapara, Malkangiri and Nabarangpur out of the 30 districts of the state, which do not have any railway line passing through them. In the year 1998-99, the density of railway route length per 1000 sq. km of area in Orissa was only 15.03 km as against 42.66 km in West Bengal and 19.11 km. at all-India level."

In a communiqué sent to the Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh, Professor Baral presented a feasible model for the revitalization of the entire region.

Dear Prime minister: As an economist and a world leader you must know that lack of connectivity, entrenched forest and mountainous areas together with a different population base is a recipe for the sprouting of troubled areas. This is true all across the world; from J& K and North eastern areas of India to caucuses in Asia. While one cannot and should not get rid of the mountains or the people, the problem can be solved by making the areas well connected and bringing development. The Indian government is doing that in J & K and in the northeast; but has mostly forgotten about the similar areas in Orissa, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh, which are the favorite bases of the naxalites and Maoists.
Sir: We would like you to pay the same attention to these areas in terms of connectivity as you do

to the North east and J & K. In particular we would request that following be done in a war footing within the 11th plan.

(i) The Vijaywada-Ranchi highway that passes through many of these areas be completed.

(ii) Broadband connectivity be brought to these districts with adequate access locations.

(iii) Two Railway lines, parts of which have already been sanctioned by the Railways but are progressing slowly, are completed and made operational. Those lines are:

a. Khurda Rd – Balangir (passes through Nayagarh and Boudh) – This line was sanctioned in 1994-95 is progressing very slowly.
b. Bhadrachalam Rd (Andhra Pradesh) – Malkangiri – Jeypore – Nabarangpur – Junagarh – Lanjigarh Rd – passing through Kandhamala – Boudh – Angul – Talcher – Bimlagarh: Several segments of these lines are approved but progressing slowly. Those segments are Junagarh – Lanjigarh Rd and Talcher – Bimlagarh. Angul – Talcher is operational.
(iv) With the above lines operational, development should be brought into Kandhamal, Boudh, Gajapati, and KBK districts (including Kalahandi and Malkangiri) through 1-2 Rail factories and public sector units that can use the steel and aluminum and power produced in abundance in Orissa.
Sir: You may be advised by the Indian Railways, which has no qualms in taking profits made from Orissa to its other projects outside Orissa that the cost of the above lines would be too much, but let me point to some data.
(a) As per the calculation in http://kbkrail.orissalinks.com/ Indian Railways is scheduled to make profit of 2679.72 crores/year from its operations in Orissa. If 1500 crores of this money (the rest may go to Indian Railway's current plans for Orissa) is put into Orissa, in just 2-3 years the above mentioned lines could be completed.

(b) While we do not begrudge IR related developments in the rest of India, we would just like to point the following to counter the common IR retort (including one given by the Railway Board chair to an Oriya-American gathering in Canada earlier this year – please see http://www.orissalinks.com/orissagrowth/archives/1550): The Indian Express article at http://www.indianexpress.com/news/Rlys-brochure-lists-what-Lalu-has-done-for-Bihar/355013/ says the following:

That Bihar has been one of the top beneficiaries of Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav's largesse in the last four years is no secret. Now, armed with an 18-page brochure, his ministry is going all out to drive home the point that Bihar bagged railway projects worth Rs 52,323 crore during his term.
Sir: We are very happy for Bihar and also for the regions benefitted by the IR's other 11th plan grand plans such as the freight corridor, metro rails and high speed rail corridors, none of which touch Orissa.
But shouldn't immediate attention be paid to bringing connectivity to the backward, forested, badly connected areas of Orissa that includes the trouble spots of Kandhamala and Malkangiri. This is especially puzzling when IR makes a lot of profit from Orissa (details at http://kbkrail.orissalinks.com/) and spends only a small part of it in Orissa. We understand that redistribution of profits and tax collections across regions of a country are normal, but does it make sense to take from the poor (Orissa) and give to the rich, especially when this act creates chaos with the poor (Kandhamala, Orissa).
Sir: We sincerely hope that you will now see the common thread running through the several large scale violent events in Orissa in 2008 and address the key issues of lack of connectivity and development in these areas.

1. Estimated profit Indian Railways will make from Orissa in 2008-09:
Zone in Orissa Total Route Kms Route kms in Orissa Estimated Orissa's proportional 2008-2009 share of the profit.

Profit in 2008-2009 (in crores)
ECOR 2430 1607 3077.15 2034.97 crores
SECR 1599 51 2529.89 80.69 crores
SER 2577 589 2467.88 564.06 crores Total 2247 2679.72 crores

2. One of the earlier planning commissions has noted in http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr_orissa/sdr_orich2.doc

"Railways have always played an important role in economic development and rapid social transformation in all parts of the globe. It is one of the key economic infrastructures. However, it is most unfortunate that in a poor and backward state like Orissa, development of rail networks has received much less attention of the Central Government in the post-independence period. There are as many as seven districts like Boudh, Kandhamal, Deogarh, Nayagarh, Kendrapara,

Malkangiri and Nabarangpur out of the 30 districts of the state, which do not have any railway line passing through them. In the year 1998-99, the density of railway route length per 1000 sq. km of area in Orissa was only 15.03 km as against 42.66 km in West Bengal and 19.11 km. at all-India level".

3. The tribal population percentage of the KBK districts are as follows: Malkangiri 58.36% ST (+19.96% SC), Rayagada 56.04% ST (+14.28% SC), Nabarangpur 55.27% ST (+15.09% SC), Koraput 50.67% ST (+13.41% SC), Nuapada 35.95% ST(+13.09% SC), Kalahandi 28.88% ST (+17.01% SC), Sonepur 22.11% ST (+9.5% SC), Balangir 22.06% ST (+15.39% SC). Two adjacent districts also have high tribal population. They are Kandhamala 51.51% ST (+18.21% SC) and Gajapati 47.88% ST(+8.77% SC).

4. The literacy rates in the KBK districts are abysmally low. Malkangiri 31.26%, Nabarangpur 34.26%, Rayagada 35.61%, Koraput 36.2%, Nuapada 42.29%, Kalahandi 46.2%, Balangir 54.93%, Sonepur 64.07%. Two adjacent districts also have low literacy: Gajapati 41.73% and Kandhamala 52.95%. The state average is 63.1%.

5. Population below the poverty line in southern Orissa (of which KBK is a part) is reported to be 89.17% of the people according to the 1999-2000 NSS data and 72% of the families according to the 1997 census.[CDLXXIV]

A pattern of recurring violence and dysfunctionality have plagued Kandhamal. Conversely, Orissa's people have time and again provided the solutions to these very same dilemmas. There is no dearth of well intended and practical solutions to Kandhamal. The problem lies squarely in the lap of those groups and individuals that benefit from the ongoing turmoil. Kandhamal is being used as a fulcrum for a nation-wide crusade against the BJP. By strait-jacketing the image of fanatic, extremism upon the BJP, people are being manipulated into either being seen as '*reasonable*' supporters of '*secularism*' or labeled as supporters of the '*hate-mongering Hindu fanaticism'*. The daily and harsh propaganda is devised in order to rationalize the dehumanization of the BJP and its supporters. As noted earlier, it is an old tactic that has always been a component of Western Imperialism.

CDLXXIV **Development of KBK+ Region in Orissa** *'Open Letter to PM on Kandhamal violence-proposed long term solutions'*

Orissa's industrial potential is enormous but it remains virtually untapped. Recent plans by the Indian owned Vedanta Resources to develop Orissa's mining industry have been severely challenged. Recognizing the concerns of Orissa's people, Vedanta Resources has pledged US $1 billion towards the construction of Vedanta University. This will become India's first University on par with Oxford and Harvard Universities. This project has great prospects towards revolutionizing India's potential.

Orissa is a resource rich State. Its untapped potential has been at the center of a massive struggle between many vested interests. In a July 2008 speech Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik revealed some of the details in this regard.

"Mineral-rich Orissa has been badly affected by the national mineral policy. The policy ignores value-addition of mineral resources and delays the revision of coal and mineral royalty," he roared at the rally. He added that the state exchequer was incurring a revenue loss of Rs 6,000 crore every year due to the non-revision of the royalty. "To add to it, the UPA does not release adequate funds, hindering development. But the government has launched schemes out of its own resources to help out. We will also launch a scheme to provide rice at rupees two per kg from August 1. Patnaik's key advisor Rajya Sabha MP Pyarimohan Mohapatra accused the Congress led UPA government of neglecting Orissa. He alleged that because of negligence by the Union Government of India, the state has lost crores of rupees. Adopting a resolution to this effect at its Vikas Samavesh, the BJD youth wing chief Sanjay Das Verma said, "The economic blockade will be confined to mineral bearing districts of the state. We want to voice our strong objection against national mineral policy by resorting to such a blockade." The resolution said that Orissa was deprived of at least Rs 5000 crore per annum due to non-revision of royalty on various minerals. As per the resolution, the rail roko agitation will be a statewide movement to protest against discrimination shown by railways, which earns thousands of crores from Orissa but allots a paltry sum on new railway lines in the state. Significantly, it is for the first time that the ruling BJD has decided upon a economic blockade. Its ruling partner -the BJP had organized such blockades in Angul and Keonjhar areas earlier on local issues."[CDLXXV]

Attempts to harness Orissa's natural resources have collided with legitimate tribal interests and environmental concerns. However various International agencies and interests, including India's Congress Party led UPA government have latched onto these concerns as a means to frustrate the development of Orissa's infrastructure. As

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CDLXXV **Meri News** '*BJD accuses UPA government of neglecting Orissa*' Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa July 31, 2008

noted by Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik the Central government is also guilty of withholding mineral royalties from the State of Orissa.

Various foreign based organizations and nations like Norway have led the charge against the ongoing efforts to utilize Orissa's natural resources. As the West enjoys full and unfettered access to its natural reserves, various environmental front groups are leading the charge against India's development. Currently Australia is the world's leading producer of bauxite. However it is Orissa that holds the world's largest reserves of bauxite. Unlike Australia, whose native and tribal cultures were long ago disenfranchised from any claim to the resources, Orissa's tribes maintain their primacy. As Western industry siphons the wealth from the stolen lands of tribes long extinct, Indian industry is obliged to uphold the tribal claims as it attempts to compete on the global market. Vedanta Resources has committed itself to an agenda that is guaranteed to uplift the local tribes people. (Note: One Crore is an Indian Unit of measure equal to Ten Million.)

1. *Giving Rs 55 crore as NPV (to be used for forestation and forest preservation in the area)*
2. *Giving Rs 52.5 crore for the protection and preservation of wildlife*
3. *Giving Rs 12.5 crore for tribal welfare*
4. *Forming a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) with the Orissa government and the OMC for scheduled area development of Lanjigarh*
5. *Contributing 5% of the net profit before taxation to the SPV annually*
6. *Committing to the number of locals who could be given permanent employment*

In late July 2008, after years of legal wrangling, Vedanta Resources and South Korea's POSCO were given the green light to begin mining operations. Opponents of the mining operations responded with indignation.

'Knock down St. Paul's Church to raise awareness of Orissa desecration'

"A global anti-poverty charity wants the hallowed St Paul's cathedral in London to be demolished in protest against the move by a British mining company to extract bauxite from a mountain in the Indian state of Orissa which is considered sacred by a resident tribe. Action Aid raised this demand in an application to the governing body of St Paul's to highlight its

opposition to mining activities of Vedanta Resources Plc at the Niyamgiri mountain. The mountain is revered by the 8,000-strong Kondh tribe which lives there, it said. Brendan O'Donnell, an Action Aid campaigner, said: 'This is a David and Goliath struggle - we've applied to knock down St Paul's Cathedral to raise awareness of Vedanta's outrageous plan to destroy the Kondh's spiritual home. Just as Londoners wouldn't tolerate the demolition of their cathedral to make a quick buck, so the Kondh people won't allow their treasured mountain and forests to be destroyed."[CDLXXVI]

The incongruity of the Western powers coming to the rescue of India's tribes is glaring. Built upon the destruction of the environment and of countless indigenous societies, Western industry is attempting to thwart Indian industry; all in the name of the preserving the environment and indigenous culture of Orissa. India's Congress Party has also joined the bandwagon and has called for a halt to the development of Orissa's mining potential. In fact the Congress UPA government has been accused of conspiracy against Orissa for supporting the claims of a group from the neighboring state of Jharkhand over three Orissa districts.

In July 2008, Orissa CM Patnaik Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik lambasted Jharkhand Mukti Morcha's (JMM) demand for the inclusion of three districts of Orissa in Shibu Soren's vision of a *'Greater Jharkhand'*, which the UPA government has reportedly agreed to consider. The BJD chief dubbed the demand as a '*conspiracy*' against Orissa.

While the apprehension regarding the long term impact of Vedanta Resources' mining operations are valid, the unfortunate reality is that the issue is being exploited by outside interests. Rather than a genuine concern based upon altruistic motives, foreign powers are attempting to eradicate the challenge of a rising India. Opponents of Orissa's development have skillfully validated their humanitarian credentials through an alliance with the justifiably concerned Kandha tribes people of the Kalahandi district. The entire issue has been portrayed as a David and Goliath struggle between Industry and Nature. However, this is nothing more than a façade. Assuming the semblance of environmental concern, they are attempting to denude Indian industry of its competitiveness. India's industry and political leadership is required to act in a manner that addresses the legitimate concerns of the people. Yet the harnessing of

CDLXXVI **Indo-Asian News Service** *'Knock down St. Paul's Church to raise awareness of Orissa desecration'* London, UK August 1, 2008

India's copious natural resources is vital to India and its future as an independent nation. A balance must be struck that preserves its past while assuring its people a prosperous future.

The Kandha people of Orissa represent just one of India's many tribal communities. These communities share many common problems. These have been classified by experts into seven basic issues. I have added an 8th component.

1. Technological
2. Economical
3. Ecological
4. Educational
5. Health and Nutrition
6. Demographic
7. Socio-political
8. Law and order

All of these represent the basics of any functioning society. As India's tribes have been left behind, many efforts are being made to assist them. Various groups have entered into these regions. Some have come to take advantage of the lack of progress in order to expand their political base. Others have come to assist the tribes in being who they are as they embark on the road to modernity.

The problems are numerous and the challenge enormous. Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati stepped up to this challenge. He was at the forefront of fulfilling the vision of India's first Prime Minister Jaharwal Nehru. Pandit Nehru recognized in India's tribes, a unique responsibility. During the All India Conference of Tribes at Jagdalpur, Madhya Pradesh held in March 1955, Nehru issued a call for the preservation of tribal culture and traditions.

"Wherever you live, you should live in your own way. This is what I want you to decide yourselves. How would you like to live? Your old customs and habits are good. We want that

they should survive but at the same time we want that you should be educated and should do your part in the welfare of the country."

Rejecting the demands of those hell-bent upon the westernization of the tribes, Nehru's '*Panchsheel*' proclaimed five fundamental principles for the upliftment of India's tribes.

1. People should develop along the line of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.

2. Tribal rights to land and forest should be respected.

3. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.

4. We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm them with the multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.

5. We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

As one examines Nehru's Tribal vision, it becomes obvious that Christian conversionists have been acting in a manner diametrically opposed to Nehru. Arguments have been made that the RSS/VHP affiliated VKA (Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram) are acting in a similar manner. However such arguments are based upon mere hearsay designed to discredit their efforts. Rather than contradicting Nehru's Tribal vision, the VKA is one of the rare organizations fulfilling Nehru's vision. Point by point, the VKA has become the bulwark that has maintained the integrity of India's tribes. Unlike the Christians and Maoists who demand the rejection of the ancestral ways, the VKA has developed projects that reinforce and reinvigorate the tribal customs and culture.

In a great paradox of history we find that India's current Congress Party leaders have abandoned the nationalism of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. Whether it is Cow slaughter, conversion, tribal policy or secularism, rather than today's Congress Party it is the RSS, VHP, BJP, VKA and other indigenous

groups that are in synch with the founders of modern India. Recognizing that India has always held a unique and significant role in the history of civilization, they are committed to empowering that which is uniquely Indian. Christianity, Islam and Marxists/Maoists sprouted from the tumult of the West; the Indic traditions carry a unique signature that is authentically Indian. Eminent Karnataka cultural leader, Dr. Aralumallige Parthasarathy put it in perspective:

"If Italy were to slip into the sea Christianity would survive, if Saudi Arabia were to vanish Islam would endure, but if India is lost Hinduism would diminish into obscurity."[CDLXXVII]

Rather than being a mere turn of phrase, this is a fact. Within the 60 plus years of independence, the land of India continues to send ambassadors of culture and learning throughout the world. Prior to independence the regions of modern Pakistan and Bangaladesh were equal members of the Indic cultural milieu. Hindu Sants, Gurus and Acharyas blossomed from these lands. Yet after independence, as these regions became thoroughly '*islamicized*' neither one Hindu leader nor Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh or Jain movement has arisen from Pakistan or Bangladesh. These formerly Indic lands have, for all intents and purposes, been homogenized and culturally sterilized. Conversely India continues to be the home to many illustrious Islamic scholars and movements. In fact, unlike any Muslim country, India is home to all 72 different schools of Islam. It is India's Hinduness that allows for this diversity. Hinduism is secular by nature and it is this secularism that allows for the growth of a multitude of religions, outlooks and ways of life.

Conclusions

As India steadily ascends from its centuries of slumber, many challenges have arisen. Unique amongst humanity's ancient cultures, India has survived the repeated onslaughts of foreign forces. India's vast population has been its primary defense against being absorbed by its aggressive neighbors. Today these same aggressions are being perpetrated against India. India, the home of the world's last functioning indigenous socio-political and cultural power, is being severely tested as it maintains its national unity and develops its infrastructure.

CDLXXVII **Author Interview with Dr. Aralumallige Parthasarathy** Bangalore, Karnataka October 16, 2008

India’s diversity is both its strength and its weakness. As regionalism and minority-ism shake the foundations of the country, the future of India as a nation is threatened. By constantly stirring up the fears of the minorities and the resentments of the majority, the enemies of Indian unity have expertly begun to unweave the fabric that is the Indian nation.

A war has long ago been declared against India and the entire Kandhamal conundrum is directly linked to this war. Various vested interests have joined together recognizing their common cause. These interests represent both long term and short term agendas of a diverse group of actors.

1. The Pana Christian agenda is to reinforce their political control of Kandhamal. Committed to bringing the reputation of the BJP into disrepute, a majority of the unproven accusations against the VHP and BJP are based upon the biased testimony of the Christian Pana.

2. The Maoist agenda is to once and for all gain control of Kandhamal and maintain it as a center of operations linking the North India and South India regions of the Maoists’ official ‘*liberated zone.*’ The Maoists recognize the BJP as a dangerous foe with the potential to stymie their plots of conquest.

3. The Indian Christian Church represents a diverse group of operators who generally share the goal of conversion of India and the discrediting of the RSS and BJP.

4. The Congress Party is battling to maintain its control of India. By engineering violence in Kandhamal and elsewhere, it is banking on the media to eradicate the political capital of the BJP by poisoning the public’s perception of the Hindu political party.

5. The Communists Party lacking popular support depends upon the discontentment and the angst of the people. Straggling behind every riot, leaders of the Communists, such as Brinda Karat, appear on the scene condemning their political enemies, primarily the BJP, and offering itself as the solution. The Communists and the Globalists work hand in hand. Their ultimate target is the dissolution of the Nation-State. The three primary targets of the Communist Globalists complex are Religion, the Nation-State and the Family structure. In

India it is the Hindu religion that is the target. In the West it is Christianity. The favored tactic is to pit religions against each other. The ultimate goal is the discrediting of all religion to be replaced by an atheistic utopia based upon the ideals of Marx, Stalin, Pol Pot and Mao Tse Tung. It is highly probable that the Pana Christians, including Sister Meena have been bought off by the Communists in a manner similar to that of the Gujarat '*witnesses*.' Coaxed and bribed to bear false witness by Brinda Karat and Teesta Setalvaad, the entire foundation of the anti-BJP anti-Modi conspiracy lays exposed. Time will reveal the same actors' conspiratorial roles in the Orissa mayhem as well.

6. Pakistani and Bangladeshi intelligence agencies in conjunction with Saudi Arabian funding and support have repeatedly infiltrated India. Again these forces have identified the BJP as a powerful obstacle towards its ambitions against India.

7. Western powers specifically the UK, EU, US, Norway and the UN have repeatedly interfered in India's internal affairs. Western Industry has identified Indian industry as a rising threat to its hegemony. The West has pinned its hopes upon the Congress Party, and through its media, has repeatedly defamed the BJP as a Hindu Nationalist and extremist on par with the alleged Islamic extremism of Iran.

8. China has been a long term source of tension for India. By its committed support of Pakistan, its claims upon Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkhim and elsewhere, China has clearly signaled its hostility towards India. The West intentionally aggravates tensions between the two Asian giants. China has taken disapproving notice of the growing links between the USA and India.

9. The International Globalists and Pan-National Industrialists operate beyond the restrictions of nations and political parties. These are the powers behind the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other world bodies that are attempting to create a global regulatory fund. These forces are committed towards the establishment of unelected committees that will establish economic policy for individual nations. These policies will be designed regardless of local concerns and interests and will not be answerable to the people. In mid-November 2008, India's Prime Minister and government refused to yield to these demands of the

> IMF. Retaining its power to set economic policy for India, the government rejected the IMF agenda for India. In the aftermath of the 26/11 Mumbai massacre, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh took control of the Finance Ministry. These same Globalists forces have also declared war against the BJP recognizing in them a powerful indigenous political movement based in Nationalism, the anathema of the Internationalist agenda.

Various Leftist commentators, empowered by the Globalist-controlled media outlets added their illogical rationales to India's anti-indigenous combine. It has been suggested that some among these powers have a definite role to play in the Kandhamal violence. Theories are many but the evidence is final.

Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati had become a major obstacle to the agendas of the Christian Pana, the Church, the Maoists, the Congress Party, the Communists, the West, the Internationalists, the Islamists and indirectly the Chinese as well.

The evidence indicates that Swamiji was killed by a Christian Pana-Maoist conspiracy with the backing of the Congress Party and the Globalists. Past experience does not allow for the exclusion of the ISI in the list of suspects. While no direct evidence has come forth confirming Congress Party involvement, its intentional efforts impeding the peacekeeping efforts of the Orissa State government imply complicity. As for the Globalist's involvement; we can deduce complicity by their use of the media as a tool of propaganda and by the aggressive global campaign of psychological warfare being waged against the people of Orissa and India.

By killing the Swamiji, the Christian Pana removed the guiding light of their Kandha enemy. The documents linking Orissa's Christian leadership to the murder conspiracy have so far appeared genuine. However this has not been verified. Yet, none can doubt that the killing of Swamiji was of great benefit to the Church. The long term goal of creating a hostile Christian enclave within the midst of the largest concentration of Hindus in India was threatened by Swamiji's efforts. His removal therefore became mandatory.

By Killing the Swamiji, the Maoists engaged their Kandha enemies in a war against the State and furthered their stated goal of conquering Orissa.

By manipulating the killing of Swamiji, the Congress Party was able to malign the BJP in the eyes of the world and fortify its vote base amongst Indian minorities and unobservant Hindus.

By distorting the backlash against the killing of Swamiji the news media was able to continue the mythology of Hindu extremists and innocent Christian victims. As the voice of the Globalists, the news media trivialized the fault lines at the root of the crisis and heightened the sense of chaos and crisis.

By portraying the dedication of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, and thousands of other dedicated Indians as aggressive Hindu chauvinism and extremism, the enemies of Indian progress attempt to undermine the selfless exertion of those at the forefront of the Indian renaissance and resurgence.

Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's administration has been accused of intentional negligence of the Kandhamal situation. These accusations however are based upon political motivations calculated to pressure the BJD party. The goal of creating a rift between the BJD and BJP is much larger than Orissa alone. The objective is to weaken the BJP's chances of winning power at the center. The BJP is depending on the support of regional parties such as the BJD in order to gain enough seats to claim victory in the upcoming general elections. The pressure of the Kandhamal crisis has put an immense strain upon the BJD-BJP alliance. The media and anti-BJP politicians hope to capitalize upon this.

As for the State response; the State administration had the unenviable task of restoring order in an environment where too many benefited from the chaos. The Congress led UPA Central government's refusal to send peacekeepers to the region is an example of the impediments involved. The lack of development, specifically roads and rail, severely hampered peace efforts. The constant and very real danger of Maoist terror strikes is everpresent. While the Orissa government could have done better if its current proactive measures were in place, it did the best it could. There is absolutely no evidence of any intentional negligence on the part of the State. What the State is guilty of is overreach in its efforts to protect Christians above and beyond protecting all the people of Kandhamal regardless of religious or ethnic identity. While charges are leveled that the State authorities stood by as Christians were killed and savaged, the

fact is, it was the Kandha Hindus that were neglected. As curfews were enforced, everyday tribal people could not buy food, earn money or take care of their basic needs.

None have ever suggested that every single Kandha man, woman and child were engaged in violence yet every member of the Kandha community suffered under the severe tactics of the police. Desperate Kandha women demonstrated several times demanding a lift on their freedom of movement. They were beaten down by police. The entire mood was focused upon keeping Christians safe from the Kandha, no focus was kept on ensuring for the needs of the Kandha. As Pana Christians sat cozily in relief camps getting food, medicine and shelter, the Kandha had no refuge or food. This was the State of Orissa's principal miscalculation in its handling of the recent Kandhamal emergency.

The VHP, Bajrang Dal and BJP have borne the brunt of the blame for the Kandhamal violence. Despite the popularization of this hypothesis, there has not been one shred of evidence to verify the culpability of any Hindu activists in the violence. Every accusation that has been made is based upon the opinions of those with a vested interest in the demise of the political fortunes of the BJP. To put it bluntly in spite of the media-magnified opinions of many Leftist intellectuals and politicians, there is not a single accusation against the Hindu activist groups that can stand the test of an unbiased court trial.

Hearsay, innuendo, supposition, political bias, prejudice and belief bordering upon a kind of faith are at the foundation of the allegations against the BJP. It behooves the fair-minded people of India and the world to look beyond the rhetoric. People must recognize that solutions can only come from a place of clarity. As long as unscrupulous politicians and others continue to let Kandhamal fester, problems will remain. Attempting to capitalize from its misery, the real problems are ignored, or even worse, completely denied. By creating the artificial premise of BJP based violence, Kandhamal's authentic troubles are being disregarded. This mentality has contributed to the ongoing drift into violence. By giving heed to such unwise council, the disease will once again resurface. The fragile peace will never be preserved.

India's Congress Party has biome a party built upon conflict. The media acts as its surrogate. Ignoring the drastic predicament of many Indians, it focuses upon only those incidents which can be distorted into a weapon against the BJP. Time and again we see

this phenomenon. As Assam burned and Bengal rioted, Delhi and Mumbai terrorized bombed and Biharis drowned, the Congress leadership focused its energies on Orissa. Latching onto the incidents in Kandhamal and Karnataka, the Congress re-fashioned its battle cry. Presenting itself as a knight in shining armor, Congress offers itself as the sole refuge against the '*vandals of the Hindutwa brigade*'.

Despite the oft-repeated claim that anti-minority violence benefits the BJP, the reality is the reverse. The evidence is beyond doubt. The primary beneficiary of India's frequent anti-minority violence is without question the Congress Party. The Congress led UPA government at the center, has been blatantly cheating the State of Orissa of its mineral royalties and has refused to develop rail links to the interior regions. Despite the profit gained from its Orissa operations, India's railway authorities refuse to invest in the State. These are indicative of intentional acts intended to disrupt the functionality of the State. The entire role of the Congress Party in regards to Orissa is shameful and bespeaks of a hostility imbued with corruption. It is quite probable that the withholding of mineral royalties and the refusal to invest in the State are part of a political ploy. Undermining the State during the reign of a rival is not new in politics. However it is the people that suffer. It is unfortunate that India's Congress Party, the party of Nehru and Indira, has now become the party of the ruthless and corrupt.

Despite all the trauma and tragedy, India is unique. In India we find the world as it should be. India, with all its woes remains a vibrant and dynamic nation. Indian civilization, regardless of religion, is a model of unity in diversity. A nation of millions with differing languages, customs, religious outlooks and traditions is a nation of one. As the diversity of the world generates a multitude of experiences and opportunities, the world in itself remains one. While the majority of human societies have lost their natural diversity and multiplicity of cultures, India is a reminder to us all of what can be. It is a call to return to a time when all was sacred. As religious and political homogeneity enveloped and obliterated the cultures of the ancient world, India remains as a living example of humanity's natural condition. India's Hindu civilization, rather than another hegemonistic religion competing for followers, is all inclusive. Throughout history it is this Hindu foundation that has facilitated India's diversity. India progresses through the reinforcement of India's tradition of all-inclusive Hinduism. When India advances, the entire world benefits. It behooves all good people of the world to

recognize the magnitude of what India truly is. In India lies the blueprint for a prosperous and sustainable civilization, united in its diversity.

ANNEXURES

Images of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and his various projects in Kandhamal

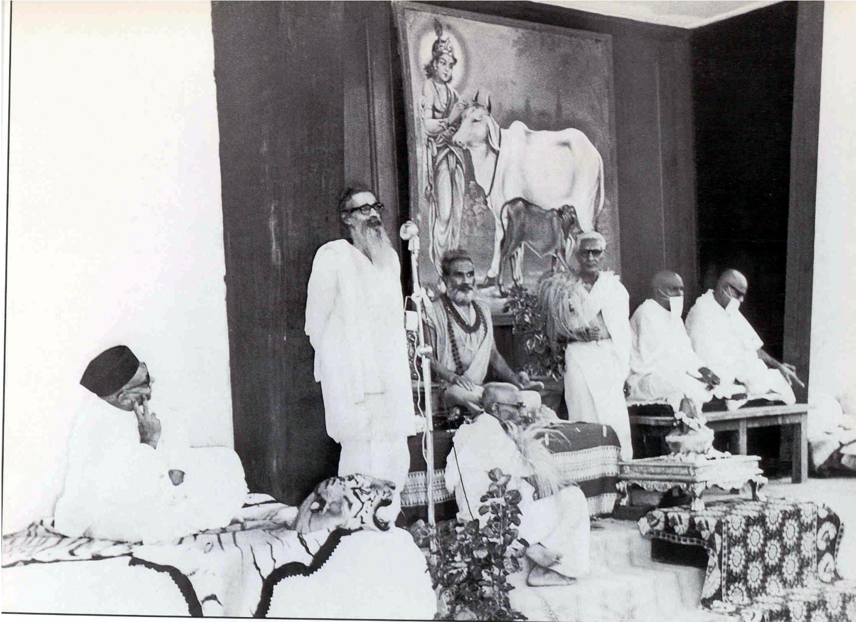


Swamiji with Crystal Shiva Linga



पौने दो करोड़ हस्ताक्षरों के साथ आवेदन पत्र।
An appeal (letter) signed by more than 17 million citizens.

17 million Indian citizens signed an appeal to ban cow slaughter in India



Jains and Hindus Unite to Ban Cow Slaughter



With the Tribals

























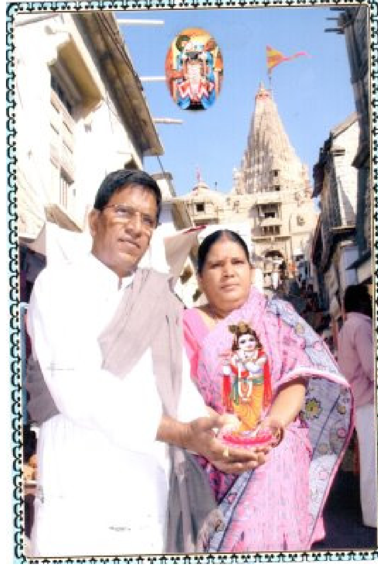

ବିଶ୍ୱହିନ୍ଦୁ ପରିଷଦ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା











Amritananda



Kishore Baba

Post-Assassination pictures depicting the brutality of the attack. The victims bodies were hacked up after they were shot dead.




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Hindu Temples Under Attack



Gumukia Shiva Temple burnt by the Christians





R. Tribals Protesting Attack on Temple. L.Shiva Temple in Babudihi, Subdena Burnt to the Ground

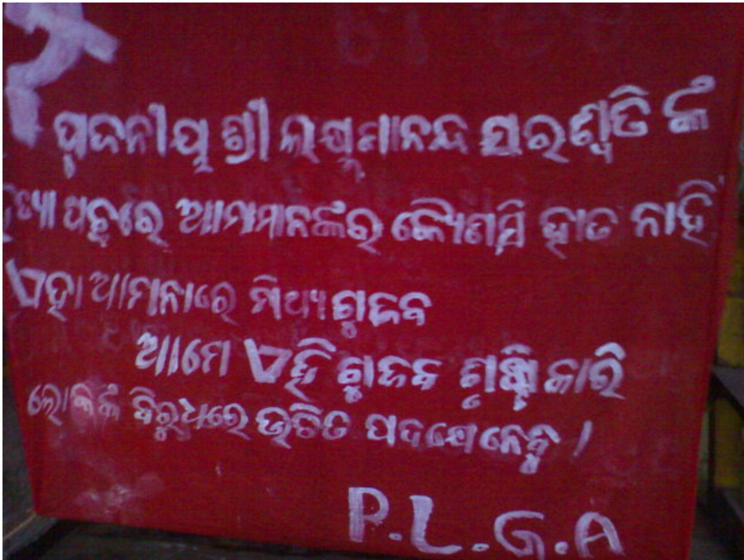



Hindu Temple Door Charred by Fire



Hindu burn victim Dhanu Sethi

Maoist Documentation



Maoist Banner Denying their Involvement in the Killings

Maoist Letters Released to the Media and Sent to Various Hindu Leaders



ସିପିଆଇ (ମାଓବାଦୀ)

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରାଜ୍ୟ ସାଂଗଠନିକ କମିଟି

ତା ୨୩/୯/୦୮

ପ୍ରେସ୍ ବିବୃତ୍ତି

ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଣାନନ୍ଦ ସରସ୍ୱତୀଙ୍କୁ ଆମ ପାର୍ଟି ତରଫରୁ ମୃତ୍ୟୁଦଣ୍ଡ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି ବୋଲି ଆମେ ବହୁ ବାର ଗଣମାଧ୍ୟମ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ପ୍ରେସ୍ ବିବୃତ୍ତି ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଜଣାଇ ଆସିଛୁ । ତଥାପି ବିଜେପି ବିଜେଡିର ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଲଘୁ ଦମନରେ କିଛି ଗଣମାଧ୍ୟମ ମଧ୍ୟ ସହାୟତା କରୁଥିବା ଆମେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରୁଛୁ । କାରଣ ଆମର ପ୍ରେସ୍ ବିବୃତ୍ତି ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଲୋକ ଲୋକଲୋଚନକୁ ନଆଣି ଅସଲ ସତ୍ୟତାକୁ ଲୁଚାଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା ଚଳାଉଛନ୍ତି । ଏହାଦ୍ୱାରା ବିଜେପି ବିଜେଡିର ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱାବଧାନରେ ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍‌ର କିଛି କର୍ମୀ , ଫୁଲବାଣୀର ବିଜେପି ଏମ୍‌ଏଲ୍‌ଏ ଓ କିଛି ଅସାଧୁ ଜମିଦାର ଓ ସାହୁକାର ଲୋକମାନେ ମିଶି ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଲଘୁ ହତ୍ୟାକାଣ୍ଡମାନ ରଚନା କରିଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଆମେ ଅସଲ ସତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଗଣମାଧ୍ୟମ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରୁଛୁ ।

ସରକାରୀ ତଥ୍ୟ ଅନୁସାରେ ଦଙ୍ଗାରେ ଏପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ୧୬/୧୭ ଜଣ ଲୋକ ମରିଛନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତାହା ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ମିଥ୍ୟା ଏପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ୨୮ ଜଣ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଲଘୁଙ୍କୁ ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍‌ ଓ ପୋଲିସ୍ ମିଳିତ ଭାବେ ହତ୍ୟା କରିଛନ୍ତି । ପୋଲିସ୍ ସହରରେ ରହୁଛି । ଗାଁରେ ସଂଗଠିତ ଭାବେ ସଂଖ୍ୟାଲଘୁ ନିଧନ ଓ ଘରଭଙ୍ଗା ଚାଲିଛି । କେବଳ ବିପ୍ଳବୀ ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନର ଶକ୍ତି ଥିବା ଜାଗାରେ ଦଙ୍ଗାକୁ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରାଯାଇପାରିଛି । ଗଜପତିର ବିପ୍ଳବୀ ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ ଅଂଚଳ-ରାୟଗଡ଼ା କଂଧମାଳର କେତେକ ଅଂଚଳ କୋଟଗଡ଼ , ଦାରିଙ୍ଗବାଡ଼ି ଆଦିରେ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରିତ । ଗଜପତିର ଯେଉଁ ଅଂଚଳରେ ଆମର ଉପସ୍ଥିତି ନାହିଁ ସେ ଅଂଚଳରେ ଦଙ୍ଗା ହୋଇଛି । ଅନ୍ୟ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଦଙ୍ଗା କରିବା ଲୋକ ଉପରେ ପାର୍ଟି ତରଫରୁ କଠିନ ଦଣ୍ଡ ଦିଆଯିବ । ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ଦଙ୍ଗା କରୁଥିବା ଲୋକ ସମସ୍ତେ କଂଧମାଳର ଶୋଷକ ଜମିଦାର ଓ ସାହୁକାର ଅଟନ୍ତି । ଏହିମାନଙ୍କ ଆର୍ଥିକ ଶୋଷଣର ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥରେ ଧର୍ମ ଓ ଜାତି ଆଧାରରେ ଦଙ୍ଗା ଚାଲିଛି । ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍ , ବିଜେପି , ଭିଏଚପି ତା'ର ଶୋଷକ ଶ୍ରେଣୀର ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥ ରକ୍ଷା ଲାଗି ଧର୍ମ ଆଧାରରେ ଦଙ୍ଗା କରୁଛି । ଦଙ୍ଗା ବନ୍ଦ ନକଲେ ଏମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଦଣ୍ଡ ଭୋଗିବାକୁ ହେବ । ଯେଉଁ ମାନେ ଦଙ୍ଗା ଆଳରେ ସଂଖ୍ୟାଲଘୁ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ହତ୍ୟା କରିଚାଲିଛନ୍ତି ଆମେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ନାମ ଘୋଷଣା କରୁଛୁ ଏବଂ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଚରମବାଣୀ ଶୁଣାଉଛୁ ଯେ ସେମାନେ ଯଦି ଦଙ୍ଗାକରିବା , ଘରପୋଡ଼ିବା , ସଂଖ୍ୟାଲଘୁଙ୍କୁ ହତ୍ୟା କରିବା , ଜନଗଣଙ୍କୁ ଗାଁ ଭିତରକୁ ପଶିବାକୁ ନଦେବା ଭଳି କୁକାର୍ଯ୍ୟରୁ ନିବୃତ୍ତ ନହୁଅନ୍ତି ତେବେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଣାନନ୍ଦ ଭଳି ଦଣ୍ଡ ଦିଆଯିବ । ଆମେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ନାମ ଘୋଷଣା କରୁଛୁ । ସେମାନେ ହେଲେ **ଦାରିଙ୍ଗବାଡ଼ିର** - ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ସାହୁ -ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ସଭାପତି , ଅଜିତ ସାହୁ କଣ୍ଟ୍ରାକ୍ଟର ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍ , ଗଦାପୁରର ରଜା ଆଦି । **ରାଇକିଆର** - ମନୋଜ ପ୍ରଧାନ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ସଭାପତି ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍ , ସୁଦାମ ବେହେରା ବଡ଼ ବ୍ୟବସାୟୀ -ସାହୁକାର-ଗାଡ଼ିମାଲିକ , ପଦ୍ମ ପଣ୍ଡା ବେପାରୀ , ଦିଲୁ ମହାନ୍ତି । **ବାଲିଗୁଡ଼ାର** - ବିଜେପି ଏମ୍‌ଏଲ୍‌ଏ (ନିଲିଗୁଡ଼ା) ନରେନ୍ଦ୍ର ମାଝୀ , ଗଙ୍ଗା ସାହୁ , ରବି ପାଳ । **ଫିରିଙ୍ଗିଆର** - ବାଳକୃଷ୍ଣ ଜୁଣ୍ଡି । **କ.ନୂଆଗାଁର** - କୃଷ୍ଣ ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ ବିଜେପି ଜିଲ୍ଲା ନେତା , ପଣ୍ଡିତ ବିଶି ମାଝୀ , କକ ସାହୁ ଆଦି ।

କୁର୍ମଗଡ଼ (ତୁମୁଡ଼ିବନ୍ଧରେ) ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍ ଲୋକ ବନ୍ଧୁକ ଓ ମାରଣାସ୍ତ୍ର ଧରି ପୋଲିସ୍ ଉପରେ ଆକ୍ରମଣ କରିବା ଘଟଣାରେ ପୋଲିସ୍ ଗୁଳି ଚଳାଇବାରୁ ୭ ଜଣ ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍ ଲୋକ ମରିଛନ୍ତି । ଏଇଥିରୁ ପ୍ରମାଣିତ ଯେ , ସଂଖ୍ୟାଲଘୁ ଲୋକ ନୁହେଁ ବରଂ ଆର୍‌ଏସ୍‌ଏସ୍ ହିଁ ଅସ୍ତ୍ରଶସ୍ତ୍ରରେ ସଜ୍ଜିତ ହୋଇ ଲୋକ ଉପରେ ହାମଲା କରୁଛି ।

ଶାନ୍ତି ଓ ସଦ୍‌ଭାବ ବଜାୟ ରଖି ଗରିବ ଦଳିତ , ଆଦିବାସୀ ଓ ସଂଖ୍ୟାଲଘୁ ମାନେ ଏକ ହୋଇ ଏକ ଶୋଷଣହୀନ ସମାଜ ଗଠନ କରିବା ଦିଗରେ ଆଗେଇ ଆସିବା ପାଇଁ ଆମେ ଆହ୍ୱାନ କରୁଛୁ ।

ନିବେଦକ

[signature]

(ସୁନୀଲ୍)

ସଂପାଦକ

ସିପିଆଇ(ମାଓବାଦୀ)

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରାଜ୍ୟ ସାଂଗଠନିକ କମିଟି

To,

[illegible]

No-1: We gave a death sentence to Swamiji, claims CPI (Maoists)

Bhubaneswar: Our party has given death sentence to Swami Laxmananda Saraswati but BJD-BJP Government continuing its mayhem on minority Christians. Our party through this press statement wants to share to some truth. Leaders of BJP, RSS, local contractors and landowners have been attacking Christian people and vandalizing churches without any valid reason, CPI (Maoists) Orissa State organizing committee secretary

Sunil said. The Government is hiding the truth over the death toll. The Government saying 16 to 17 people has been killed in the violence but we have report that 28 have been killed and most of them were Christians. The police manning the urban areas, while RSS and all its affiliated bodies spreading mayhem in rural areas of Kandhamal. Where, our party has strong base, rioters did not dare to enter into these areas, it said. Few areas in Gajapati, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Kotagada and Daringbadi, where we have strong presence, there was no report of communal violence, it said. if they did not stop violence, our party would give befitting reply to it, Sunil said in his statement.

Niranjan Sahu of Daringbadi, Contractor Ajit Sahu, Raja of Gadapur, Manoj Pradhan , Sudam Behera, Padma Panda, Dilu Mohanty of Raikia, Baliguda BJP MLA Karendra Majhi, Ganga Sahu, Rabi Pal of Baliguda, Balakrushna Jundi of Phiringia, Krushna Panigrahi, Pandit Bisi Majhi and Kaka Sahu of K Nuagaon were among those creating communal tension and killing Christians in Kandhamal, Sunil alleged. RSS men were keeping arms and ammunition, which was probed after police firing in Tumulibandha area, where 7 RSS men killed.

No-2: Threat letter to Hindu leader

Bhubaneswar: People Liberation of Gurrilla Army has asked several Kandhamal based Hindu leader to refrain from communal violence or face the red music. A letter issued by the PGLA of the outlawed CPI(Maoists), has asked Khageswar Pradhan of Tiangia village, advocate Bhagban Mohanty, contractor Durjyadhan Patnaik and advocate Ramesh Mohanty to stop violence on Christians.

No-3 Maoists deny role in Swamiji's killing

BERHAMPUR: The mystery behind the gruesome murder of VHP leader Swami Lakshmanananda Saraswati and his four associates has deepened. The Bajrang Dal and VHP activists as well sections of the media have received a suspected Maoists' letter where they claim that their central committee had no role in the murder. The letter claimed that some wayward cadre of the Maoist outfit was lured by nefarious elements to commit the crime. Meanwhile naxal sympathizers of Orissa have also claimed that Maoists had no hand in the murder of the VHP activists at Jalaspata in Kandhamal district. A copy of the letter was sent to the State joint secretary of the VHP and the State joint coordinator of the Bajrang Dal, Ramakant Rath. The letter claimed to be written by the Kotgarh unit of the CPI-Maoist party. As per the letter the organization would

initiate action against some of their cadres in Kandhamal district who could be hired for money by communal Christian miscreants for the murder of the VHP leader and his associates. The reason for the murder was their opposition to religious conversion by missionaries and recent clash over cow slaughter in Tumudibadh area. "The State central committee of the Maoists had no knowledge of this", the letter claimed. The naxals felt police were putting the blame of murder of VHP leader on them trying to detach them from the common mass. Many Maoist sympathizers of south Orissa have also denied the role of CPI-Maoist in the murder of VHP leaders that sparked off communal violence in Kandhamnal district. Through a press note Dandapani Mohanty, general secretary of the Orissa Forest Mazdoor Union said Maoists had no role in the communal murders in Kandhamal district. It may be noted that Mr Mohanty earlier headed the Daman Pratirodh Manch, which was banned by the State Government for its pro-naxal activities. The case filed by against the ban order is sub judice in the Orissa High Court.

No-4 Maoists Letter claims responsibility of Swamiji's Murder

In a significant development, a "Maoist" letter claiming responsibility of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati's murder at Jalespata Ashram on August 23 has come up in public 17 days after Swamiji's gruesome killing. The letter signed by Sunil of CPI, was circulated among a few journalists in the State. "The PLGA (Peoples Liberation Guerilla Army) has carried out the death sentence it had passed against Swami Laxmanananda on 23 August for inflicting torture and misery on a large number of tribal and dalit people in the name of Hinduism', said the letter. The letter advocated secularism and condemned both BJD and BJP for spreading communal tension in the state. The letter also alleged that Congress is trying to take political mileage from the situation in Kandhamal. The way the letter supported Christian missionaries and lashed out at the Hindu groups and political parties, has left no doubt that it was a well-planned propaganda to save the Christians from the wrath of Hindus. Earlier, another Maoist leader had claimed that some vested Maoists comrades had colluded with Christian missionaries to eliminate Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati.

No-5 Swami's killing splits rebels in Orissa

BHUBANESHWAR: Differences have cropped up in Maoist cadres after the killing of 86-year-old VHP monk Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati in Orissa and the riots that

followed. Protesting the communal violence in the region, a few Maoists are reported to have left their organisations. While a section of Maoists has taken the reasonability for the death of Laxmanananda, another group has denied it. Claiming to be members of the CPI (Maoist), the rebels said in a letter they had given capital punishment to the swami, as he was responsible for creating division in society and torturing tribals and dalits in the name of Hindu dharma. The Maoists said the BJP, RSS, Bajrang Dal and the VHP were creating disturbance in the country by claiming that India was a Hindu country. The Hindu organisations have also termed Muslims terrorists and Christians Maoists, which is unfortunate, they said, adding that the CPI (Maoist) neither supported Hindus nor Christians. They also alleged that the BJP and the Sangh Parivar were responsible for the Kandhamal riots. On the other hand, in a letter to Puri Govardhana Pitha Sankaracharya Nischalananda Saraswati, another section of Maoists said they knew who had killed the Swami. For money, they killed the swami. Appropriate punishment will be meted out to them soon they said

No-6 Maoists ask police not to harass people

Bhubaneswar: A signed letter by the CPI-Maoist has asked the Orissa Police not to harass innocent people in connection with the killings of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati and his disciples as the Naxal organisation is solely responsible for the murders. The letter, sent to several newspaper offices, has been signed by Sunil. The same person had earlier written letters to media houses after the Maoists carried out attacks in Nayagarh and Malkangiri districts. The letter said, "The People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) gave death sentence to Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati as he was harassing the tribals and Dalits in the name of religion. From the beginning, our party is opposed to cheap politics which is based on religion and promotes self-interest. We are neither supporting Hindus nor Christians. In the name of controlling the riots, the state government is arresting members of the minority community. Is it proper to arrest 54 people when we have killed Swami Laxmanananda?" he asked. The letter further added, "India is a secular country. It's not proper to describe Muslims as terrorists or Christians as Maoists. It's extremely sad that ordinary Hindus and Christians have suffered in these riots." Bajrang Dal national co-convenor Subash Chauhan said, "The contents of the letter are a blatant lie. These letters are being sent by members of a particular religious group to divert attention.

Why was Laxmananda given death sentence? CPI (Maoists)

We know, religion is a very emotive issue for a common man. Despite this, our party, CPI (Maoists) has given death sentence to Hindu fundamentalist and villain of VHP, saffron clad Laxmananda and four of his followers at Jalespata Ashram in Tumulibandha police limits of Kandhamal district on August 23. The death sentence was given to Laxmananda for the Sangha Pariwar's anti-minority policies and for demolishing Babri Mashjid, Gujarat riots, killing of Graham Stains and his sons and many other issues. Many people saying that he was a good man, worked for the development of tribals but we believe that he was spreading communalism in the district and other tribal areas.

Are Tribals Hindu? Maoist Say No.

Firstly, Kui, Sara, Koya and other primitive tribes in the country are not Hindu. Each group has its own religion and own language. Their belief and customs mostly locally in nature and domestic animals, birds hens are their daily foods. Successive Governments and Hindu fundamentalists are arguing that they are Hindu. Phulabani should not be pronounced as Kandhamal, which hurts the sentiments of tribals. The tribal do not need Brahmin priests to offer prayer to their presiding deity, Gangapenu(Water God). Castes of Hindu religion or Brahmanism **?** Although generally identified with Hinduism, the caste system was also observed among followers of other religions in the Indian subcontinent, including some groups of Muslims and Christians.[1] The Indian Constitution has outlawed caste-based discrimination, in keeping with the socialist, secular, democratic principles that founded the nation.[2] Caste barriers have mostly broken down in large cities,[3] though they persist in rural areas of the country. Nevertheless, the caste system, in various forms, continues to survive in modern India strengthened by a combination of social perceptions and divisive politics. RSS, VHP, BJP and other Hindu outfits are only saying for Hindus. Brahmanism also creating lot of social problem and they are exploiting lower caste people.

Who eats which type of meat?

Several Hindu outfits have been misguiding people over beef eating. In earlier days, Brahmins were eating beefs and cattle were sacrificed in Hindu temples. Many people, before converting into Hinduism, were eating beefs and now some Hindu outfits demanding ban on beef eating and cattle trading. Who eats which foods, that demands

upon one's interest and likings but no body should stop them. So, we must oppose the anti-cow slaughter laws introduced by the Orissa Government. Hindu fundamentalists are only confusing everyone over this issue and asking people not to take beefs, as it is anti-religion.

Maoists' Nine point charge sheet against VHP, Laxmananda

1. Sangha Pariwar unsuccessfully trying to convert tribal into Brahmanism. The Hindu fundamentalists forcing tribal to wear paita and plotted drama by saying that they are now became Brahmin. But in case of any domestic festival, marriage and any local celebration, people of higher caste did not attend the functions of tribal. The tribals are drinking foot waters of Laxmananda Saraswati. If a tribal takes food from a lower caste people, he has to be bald headed.

2. Sangha Pariwar stopping tribals to eat beefs but the same people using all items of a cattle for their survival. For money, Hindus are even selling their cattle, after their expiry arises. Why Laxmananda keep silence, when a Hindu sales his cattle? Why he prefers to stop tribals only doing so?

3. Sangha Pariwar also reconverting Christian people into Hinduism. The Hindu outfits while threatening tribals have engaged in large-scale re-conversion activities. Fearing Saffron terror, innocent tribals have been reconverting into Hinduism. Laxmananda with the help of higher caste Hindu people and landowners, were preparing for a communal riot and they did it in December 2007. They went on rampage in Phulabani and Kandhamal and killed Christians and vandalize churches and prayers houses.

4. People of higher caste are exploiting tribals on all fronts and those from costal areas, settled in tribal areas, are creating more problems. With the help of RSS and VHP, they are doing what ever they think and wish.

5. Ahead of Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, BJD-BJP Government led by Naveen Patnaik trying to win hearts of majority Hindus in the State and for which, they are targeting minorities for vote bank. Police also helping the RSS and VHP and we perceived it as a State sponsored terrorism in Orissa.

6. Laxmananda was sexually harassing innocent tribal girls at Jalespata Ashram in Tumulibandha in Kandhamal district. He was not creating communal tension but also sexually enjoying tribal girls.

7. With the help of BJP MLA, Laxmananda had hijacked all welfare measures for dalit Christians. Whatever facilities available, it was not for Christians but for Hindus.

8. Sangha Pariwar misguiding common people over service. They did nothing instead creating communal tension between two communities. They are teaching all wrong to students and provoking them against a particular community.

9. Since December 2007, they are engaged in communal tension and attacking minorities in Kandhamal and elsewhere. So VHP is a communal outfit and poisoned Hindu group. We appeal to common people not to succumb to Sangha Pariwar pressure.

After Laxmananda's death sentence

We did a great job by killing Laxmananda. According to us, it's a death sentence for a Hindu fundamentalist. The so-called secular forces including Congress, CPI, NCP, CPI (M), JMM, CPI (M-L) Liberation, Samruddha Odisha were among those criticizing Laxmananda's killing but we feel that we did right thing at right time.

August 25 State sponsored bandha and riots

Keeping an eye on vote bank, the Sangha Pariwar is trying to make Orissa as second Gujarat. They went on berserk on August 25, killed innocent minorities, and torched a church. The Orissa Government did everything to ensure that the Bandh could be successful. It was a state sponsored Bandh and terrorism of VHP.

Our appeal: Eat Beef and Fight the Hindu Fundamentalists

We appeal to every walks of life not to succumb to Sangha Pariwar pressure and opt what ever religion, they wish or like. All should take their food as per their liking. Do not hesitate to eat beef if you want to do so. Join hands with us to fight against Hindu fundamentalists. Our party CPI(Maoists), Military wing, PGLA and true secularists should join hands with us

First incident reports filed by various Hindu victims of Christian aggression

ମାନ୍ୟବର ଘ- ଉଦୟଗିରି ଭାରପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ଥାନା ଅଧିକାରୀ ମହୋଦୟଙ୍କ
.... ଶ୍ରୀ ସମୀପେଷୁ ।

ବିଷୟ:- ଜୀବନରେ ମାରିଦେବାକୁ ଧମକ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ।

ମହାଶୟ,

ମୁଁ ଉମାକାନ୍ତ ପୂଜାରୀ, ପି- ପ୍ରଫୁଲ୍ଲ ପୂଜାରୀ ଗ୍ରା- ବଙ୍ଗାପୁର ଥା- ଘ. ଉଦୟଗିରି ଲେଖିଦେବା ସବିନୟ ରିପୋର୍ଟ ଏହି କି ଗତ ତା- ୨୨/୦୨/୦୮ ରିଖ ସୋମବାର ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ୬.୩୦ ମି ରେ ମୁଁ ଟିଆଳିଭଟିରୁ ସାଇକେଲ ନେଇ ଫେରୁ ଥିଲି । ଏହି ସମୟ ପ୍ରାୟ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ହୋଇ ଅନ୍ଧକାର ଦେଖାଯାଉ ଥାଏ, ଏହି ସମୟ ପ୍ରାୟ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ହୋଇ ଅନ୍ଧକାର ଦେଖାଯାଉ ଥାଏ, ସେତେବେଳେ ଡଗାଲିର ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ ସାହି ଗାଁର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଲୋକ ସାହିର ଲୋକ ନାମ- ସୁମନ୍ତ ମାଳି, ପିତା- ସ୍ୱ. କାଳିଆ ମାଳି, ବ- ଆସି ମୋତେ କହୁଥିଲା ଭାଷାରେ "ସଉରା ମାଗିଆ ବୁଝାଏ ପାଇ ଥିଲୁ, ତୁମକୁ ମୂଲା, ନା ଅଧିଆଲୁ ମିଳିବ ।" ଏହା କାହିଁକି ଗାଳି ବିଷୟ କହିଲା । ଏହି ଶୁଣି ମୁଁ ଚିଆ ହୋଇ ଆଉ ପଚାରିବା କଥା କହିଲି । ମୋତେ ଭାଇ ଭଳି କାହିଁକି କହୁଛ ? ସେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ପାଉଲୁ ଅନାଇଲି ସଙ୍ଗେ-ସଙ୍ଗେ ନିମ୍ନଲିଖିତ ଲୋକମାନେ -

ଯଥା-

୧	ସୁରେଶ ମାଳି	ପି- ଶେଖର ମାଳି
୨	ସନ୍ତୋଷ ପାଲ	ପି- ଫିଲିପ ପାଲ
୩	ରୁପା ଲିମା	ପି- ଅଗସ୍ଥ ଲିମା
୪	ମହେଶ୍ୱର ଦେବର୍ଥୀ	ପି- ନିଳକଣ୍ଠ ଦେବର୍ଥୀ
୫	ସନ୍ତୋଷ ଛିଞ୍ଚାଣୀ	ପି- ପାଷ ଛିଞ୍ଚାଣୀ
୬	ଲିମଧୀ ମାଳି	ପି- ଲାଜାର ମାଳି
୭	ଟିଲୁ ପାଣି	ପି- ଇସାକ ପାଣି
୮	ବିନୁବଲ ପାଣି	ପି- ମୁସିଆ ପାଣି
୯	ଶାନ୍ତିଲାଲ କହାର	ପି- ବାଳିକର କହାର
୧୦	ବସୁଲାଲ ସିଂ	ପି- ସାମୁଏଲ ସିଂ
୧୧	ନରେନ୍ଦ୍ର କହାର	ପି- ବାଙ୍କୁ କହାର

ଏହି ଲୋକମାନେ ମୋ ପାଖକୁ ଗାଳି କରି ଆସୁଥାଏ "ଭାଲୁଆ ମାଆଗିଆ, ରାଣ୍ଡିପୁଅ ତୁମକୁ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ମିଳିବ ।" କିଛି ଲୋକ ହାତରେ ମାରିଲେ ଆଉ କେତେ ଲୋକ ଠେଙ୍ଗା ଧରି ଗୋଡ଼ାଇ-ଗୋଡ଼ାଇ ମାରିବାକୁ ଆସିଲେ । ମୁଁ

ପ୍ରାଣ ବିକଳରେ ଗାଁ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଡାକିଲି । ସେହି ସମୟରେ ଧମକି ଦେଇ କହିଲେ ତୁମକୁ ଜୀବନ୍ତ ପକାଇ ଜଳାଇ ଦେବୁ ।

ତେଣୁ ମହାଶୟ ମୁଁ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଏକାକୀ ଜୀବନ ଯାପନ ଭୟରେ କରୁଅଛି । ତେଣୁ ଏହାର ତଦନ୍ତ କରି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରି ମୋତେ ନ୍ୟାୟ ପ୍ରଦାନ କଲେ ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଠାରେ ଚିର କୃତଜ୍ଞ ହେବି ।

To
The Officer-in-Charge,
P.S.- R. Udaygiri

Sub: Information about threating to murder.

Sir,
I Sri Umakanta Pujari S/O- Prafulla Pujari, Resident of Vill- Gargapur, P.S- G. Udaygiri beg to state that on 22.9.08 monday at about 7PM I was coming from Sialakati by bi-cycle. Generally it is the time of darkness. While I was on my way in main road of Raralai Christian sahi one person of that village named as Sumanta mall, S/O- Kalia mall came to me and used filthy languages and told ଶଳାର ସାଲିଆ ଡୁମଣ ମାରିଦେବୁ। ଡିସାଇ ସୁନା ମା ଭାଉଣୀ ଶିଖିବା। He repeated this sentence. Thereafter I asked him why are you saying this. And in the same time I heard a hallah and look behind me. I saw these persons named as (1) Suresh mall, S/O- Sekhar mall, (2) Santosh Pale, S/O- Philip Pale, (3) Rupa Lima, S/O- Alka Lima, (4) Maheswar Debanta, S/O- Nilakantha Debanta, (5) Santosh Chinchani, S/O- Jakhya Chinchani, (7) Tiku Pani, S/O- Essak Pani, (8) Phinika pani, S/O- Musa Pani, (9) Shantika Karad, S/O- Balikar Karad, (10) Bathula Singh, S/O- Samila Singh, (11) Nakhetra Karad, S/O- Barsinu Karad are coming towards me by using filthy languages such as ଶଳା ଡୁମ୍ବା ସାଲିଆ, ଆଜିଠୁ ଡିସାଇ ସୁନା ମା ଶିଖିବା। Some persons assaulted by hands and

Other person came with Terga to assault.
I ran towards whose to save my life.
At that time they threatned to blow me by
bombing.

For which your goodself I don't dare
to go alone. ~~[illegible]~~ Hence ~~to~~ Investigate ~~into~~
the matter and give me justice for
which I shall remain obliged.

To

The Officer-In-Charge
P.S – G.Udayagiri – R. Udayagiri
Phulbani

Sub: Information about snatching of golden ornaments with out any reason at Vill- Cheligada while I was on my way to Vill- chakapa to attend funeral ceremony (Sradha)

Sir,

I Sri Harikrushna Paika, S/o Late Souri Paika, resident of Vill-Majisinghi, Po- Cheligada, P.S.- G. Udayagiri begs to state that, today i.e. 24.9.08, Wednesday at about 12 pm I was going to Chakapada village to attend the funeral ceremony (Sradha). At the relevant time some villagers of Christian sole of Cheligaa named as (1) Budu Chingas, S/o Surendra Chingasingh, (2) Susanta Bira, (3) Saroj Karada along with ten other persons were also present. Due to some reasons they were engaged in quarrel with Sasikanta Pattanaik. At that time while I was going on that way they forcefully took my bicycle and broke a down. When I asked about that reasons they used filty language towards me such as Maghia, Shala, Shavara and also threatened me. As because I am a physically challenged person I felt down on the ground and they all together unitedly assaulted me by means of kicks. They threanted to kill me. If any one of your village come to Cheligada. We will born them alive. We will see which source adivasi will protect you. We are ready/prepared to fight/war. Let any Hindu come. They also threatened to blow our village by bombing. They snatched away my golden chain. I managed to left that place to save my life.

It is therefore requested to you to five stigate into the matter properly and panish them accordingly and for which I shall remain obliged.
Thanks

Witness to this

Lambodar Nayak

Yours faithfully

Harikrushna Paika

Date_______________

To

The Governor,
Orissa,Bhubaneswar.

Sir,

I,Smt.Kuni Patro @ Mallick,the convenor of Dharmarakhya Bahini,Gajapati District,draw your kind attention & immediate intervention:

That,I am an adivasi lady,belonging to Hindu community and a preacher of Hindu religion in different areas of the Gajapati district. That,I reported regarding the threats given by one Abraham Gamango,Titi Mallick,Kora Paul,Rama Dalabehera of Mohana block regarding their grudge and ill-feeling against me and the Hindu community at large. On dt.25th August,2008 after the death(murder)of Swamy Laxmanananda Saraswati in the bazar area at Mohana,where the assailents openly proclaimed and challenged me and my religion,as a result of which due to the unlawful assemblies,conspiracy and illegal comments,I reported the matter to different agencies of the District Administration who were camping at Mohana on the same day and after their non-action I sent a registered letter to treat this letter as a complaint to the I.I.C.,Mohana,S.P., Gajapati,Collector,D.I.G.,Southern Range,R.D.C.,Southern range,but till date it has not been ventilated. That my family and the general Hindus at large are now in panic and there is no peace to their souls. Most of them are hiding in the forest,anticipating the threats to be translated into action who are noted criminals,anti-socials and are supported by the administration. The anticidents Abraham Gamango who is a

Cont//2//

who is a criminal and police informer against whom lot of warrants are pending in the court of the J.M.F.C., R.Udayagiri in serious offences,vide G.R.181/1998 on the files of J.M.F.C.,R.Udayagiri,U/Sec.149,148,147,436,Sec.3 of the P.D.P.P.Act,several criminal amendment acts 395 and 307 I.P.C.,which are yet to be executed. That,in another case vide G.R.195/1998,U/Sec.147,148,341,506,149 I.P.C.on the file of J.M.F.C.,R.Udayagiri for execution,but till date the District Administration is not taking any serious action and inspite of his arrest,he is taking advice in different activities of the district administration and treating him as a Hero,which is illegal and contrary to the basic spirit of I.P.C.and Cr.P.C.. That,when the government is xthinking of disposal of old cases,knowingly how they are giving importance to a noted criminal and against whom warrants are pending ? Whether the Police Informer,he is above law of the land ? This matter is a great concerned and there is no security to the Hindus.

That,this type of activities of the dist.administration is creating very big question mark in the eyes of the general public and is moving and posing as the agent of the Home Department. That,he is a native of village Buripadar,P.S. R.Udayagiri,Dist.Gajapati,the district administration of Police knowingly providing protection to this anti-social criminal who is abetting communal tension in the entire district. The fundamental rules and the rules of Cr.P.C. are not being followed,by the Dist.Police Administration rather they are being misguided and the complainants against him are being foisted in false cases without any enquiry

as per the provisions of law.

That, the freedom of religion as guaranteed under the Indian Constitution part-III is being violated by district administration. The Hindus are minority in the Mohana block. That, we inform the Police and the district administration orally to have a peace rally at Mohana, but without giving any intimation or any cause the administration forcibly imposed Sec.144 under the advice of this Abraham Gamango and others. Still they are conspring to do away on the lives of general public and myself and moving, creating law and order in the entire area of Mohana block. That, it is unfortunate to know note that, how this warranty is able to participate in a T.I.parade in the Jail premises ? As it was conducted on 30th September, 2008. How far it is valid and why the administration giving so much of importance, who is an abetor of communal violence in the district of Gajapati.

Hence, I pray on behalf of the organisation and general public to enforce law as per the rules of the Cr.P.C. and arrest after enquiry to this warranty and provide security to the Hindus of Mohana block at large and save myself and other activists of Dharmarakhya Bahini, in the interest of social justice.

Yours faithfully,

(KUNI PATRO @ MALLICK)
High School Chokwk, Mohana
District Gajapati, Orissa

NB: Xerox copy of the report, attached herewith dt.8.9.2008.

Copy to : (1)Chief Justice, Orissa High Court for information and necessary action.

(2)Home Secretary, Govt. of Orissa,

(3)Director General of Police

To
The Collector,
Gajapati District,
Parlakhemundi.

Sub: Report regarding threat by the Christians to the undersigned.

Sir,

I the undersigned draw your attention and immediate action at your end against the stated antisocial elements.

That Mohona Block is dominated by Hindus and mainly the tribles and Pano Christians. Recently the under noted persons have openly proclaimed threats against the undersigned and her family members and associates by propogating through banners and posters at different places of Mohona.

That the undersigned is a social worker and belonging to the Hindu Community having good reputation and organisation in the district of Gajapati. She is always leading different processions and propogating in favour of social change, prohibition, against women trafficking. Some toutors of the area taking advantage of this communal riot after the death of Swami Lakhanananda Saraswati are trying to attack and made proclamation openly to do away on the life of the undersigned.

That on 2nd September 2009 some miscreants had used the name of the maiost and displayed some banners to defame the maiost who are not actually culprits. That one Abraham Gomango now a resident of Parlakhemundi town, Ramadala Behera, resident of Kadomali Village, Prasana Mali of Antaraba, Danial Gomango of Siadilati, Simio Gomango of Jharanapur, Saidrika Gomango of Palokua, Kiti Mallick of Malipadar, John Sabar of Deulo Khani, Jonesh Sabar of Duluda Panko, Sanyasi Sabar of Guddi Sahi, James Raika of Katarsingi. Methew Sabar of Palokua, Trinath Mallick of Badakhani, Jakeresha Nayak of Sanokhani, Bade Naik of Sanokhani, Kandela Sabar of Khariguda, Prafulla Sabar of Hitchagandi, Pratap Sabar of Hitchagandi, Suku Gomango of Khalamponka, Hara Mallick of Gudi Sahi, Mangala Gomango of Deulo Khoni, Marko Sabar of Delo Khoni, Danial Gomango of Khariguda, Samual Gomango of Kharipua, Lakhana Sabar of Badaipura, Simio Gomango of Gundaroguda, Palo Babu of Palokua, Bipina Sabar of Ludingi Ponka, Marko Sabar of Galimera, Ganga Sabar of Pailemo, Kambi Mallick of Paramonga, Jama Sabar of Gudi Sahi, Andriyo Gomango of Kuludapanka are conspiring by forming unlawful assembly to set fire at Mohona and its adjoining areas are making meetings to do away on the lives of Hindus particularly recently when I protested about their high handedness at Mohona and reported the matter to I.I.C., Mohona orally, no action is initiated till this time. We are now in a panic. There is no security towards our lives and properties.

That this type of criminal activities of the above named criminals, there is no peace to our souls and we are hiding here and there and not able to stay peacefully at Mohona.

That there is law and order situation mostly and most of the nearby villagers specially Hindus are not returning to their homes and hiding themselves. So I draw your attention and pray before your office to take proper action against these accused persons who are determined to cause communal violance in the area.

Yours faithfully,

Mohona,
Dt. 18/9/08

([illegible] Mallika (@ Patro)
[illegible]

ମାନନୀୟେଷୁ,
ମାନ୍ୟବର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ମହୋଦୟଙ୍କ – ଶ୍ରୀ ନବୀନ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର
ବିଷୟ:- ଅସାମାଜିକ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କ ଗିରଫ ଓ ସାମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟିକ ବିଦ୍ୱେଷ ସୃଷ୍ଟିକାରୀଥିବା ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ।

ମହାଶୟ,
ଆମ୍ଭେ କନ୍ଧମାଳ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ମହିଳା ସମିତି ତରଫରୁ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ଆକର୍ଷଣ କରୁଛୁ ଯେ ସମସ୍ତ ଜନସାଧାରଣ ଜାଣନ୍ତି ଯେ ଗତ ୨୦୦୮ ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ୨୩ ତାରିଖ ଦିନ ଜଳେସପେଟାରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଣାନନ୍ଦ ସରସ୍ୱତୀଙ୍କ ହତ୍ୟାକାଣ୍ଡ ପରେ ୨୫ ତାରିଖ ଦିନ ସାରା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ବନ୍ଦ ଅବସରରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଦଙ୍ଗାହାଙ୍ଗାମା ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୋଇଥିବା ଯୋଗୁଁ କନ୍ଧମାଳର ସବୁସ୍ଥାନରେ ଶାନ୍ତିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣଭାବେ ବନ୍ଦ ପାଳନ କରାଯାଉଥିଲା। ଏହି ଦିନ ବନ୍ଦ ପାଳନକାରୀ ଓ ବେଆଇନକାରୀ ଭାବେ ସମର୍ଥନ କଲାବେଳେ ଆଦ୍ୟାବ୍ରତ ନାୟକ, ସ୍ଥାନ-ତାରାମୋହନୀ ... ଙ୍କ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଏକ ବନ୍ଧୁକ ସହିତ ଏକ ... ସାଥିରେ ଆଉ ... ପରେ ବନ୍ଦ ପାଳନ ସମର୍ଥକ ମାନଙ୍କର ସହ ମିଶି ଯୋଗ କରି ସେ ... ଆଜି ଅଞ୍ଚଳର କିଛି ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଆତଙ୍କ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରି ଥାନାରେ କରିଥିଲେ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ପୋଲିସ୍ ଥାନା ଅଧିକାରୀ ଓ ଅଞ୍ଚଳର କିଛି ... ଙ୍କ ... ସହଯୋଗରେ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୋଷୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ନାମରେ ... ଏବଂ ସାମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟିକ ବିଦ୍ୱେଷ ଓ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୋଷ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ... ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହୁଅଛନ୍ତି।

ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ବିଷୟକୁ ନେଇ ଆମେ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ପ୍ରଶାସନ, ପୋଲିସ ପ୍ରଶାସନଙ୍କୁ ଅବଗତ କରାଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ କିଛି ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କ ଗିରଫ ଦାବିରେ ତା.୫.୧.୦୯ ରିଖ ଦିନ ... ଦାବିପତ୍ରରେ ଜଣାଇଥିଲୁ। କିନ୍ତୁ ଏହାର କୌଣସି ... ନାହିଁ ଏବଂ ଆଉ କିଛି ନୂତନ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କୁ ଗିରଫ ଏବଂ ବିଦ୍ୱେଷ ସୃଷ୍ଟିକାରୀ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଯଥା – ୧) ଆଦ୍ୟାବ୍ରତ ନାୟକ, ସ୍ଥାନ - ତାରାମୋହନୀ, ୨) ... ୩) ... ୪) ... ୫) ... (...) ୬) ... (...) ୭) ... (...) ୮) ... (...) ୯) ... (ଜଗଥରି) ୧୦) ... (...) ୧୧) ... (...) ୧୨) ... (...) ଏହି ମାନଙ୍କ ନାମ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ସାମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟିକ ବିଦ୍ୱେଷ ... ତା ୨୨।୧।୦୯ ରିଖ ଦିନ ... ଦାବି କରିଥିଲୁ। ... ପରେ ... ଙ୍କୁ ତୁରନ୍ତ ଗିରଫ ଓ ନିରୀହ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ... ଦାବି ଜଣାଇଥିଲୁ। ଥାନା ଅଧିକାରୀଙ୍କ କହିବା ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ୨୮ ତାରିଖ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିମାନଙ୍କ ଗିରଫ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତି ଦେଇଥିଲେ। ... ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ କୌଣସି ... ପାଇଁ ... ଆସିବା ପାଇଁ ... କିନ୍ତୁ କୌଣସି ଅଧିକାରୀଙ୍କ ... ପୂର୍ବରୁ ୧୦୪ ଧାରା ଜାରି କରାଯାଇଥିଲା। ... କିଛି ବିଦ୍ରୋହୀ ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀ ଆମର ... ରାସ୍ତା ... ଭାବେ କାଟି ଦେଇଥିଲେ ... ଆମେ ... ଥାନା ... ଲୋକମାନେ ... ନାହିଁ ଏବଂ ସାଧାରଣ ମଧ୍ୟ ... ମାନଙ୍କରେ ବହୁ ଅସୁବିଧାର ସମ୍ମୁଖୀନ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି।

ଏଣୁ ଆମେ ଅନୁମାନ କରୁଛୁ ଯେ ଆମର ଆଦିବାସୀ [illegible]
[illegible] ଅଭିଯୋଗ [illegible] ଏବଂ [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] ନିରୀହ [illegible] ନିରାଶା କରି [illegible]
[illegible] ।

[illegible]
[illegible] ନିବେଦନ । (ଇତି)

ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବିଶ୍ୱସ୍ତ

କୁନି [illegible]

କୁନି [illegible]

ଗ୍ରା/ପୋ- [illegible]

ଥାନା- [illegible]

ଜିଲ୍ଲା [illegible]

[illegible]

ତା: [illegible]

ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ ସମୟରେ ପୋଲିସର ଦାନବୀୟ ହିଂସା କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକଳାପରେ ,
କନ୍ଧ ଆଦିବାସୀ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନ ମୌଳିକବାଦୀଙ୍କ ମେଳ ନୈତିକ ସ୍ତରରେ
ସାମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟିକ ବିଦ୍ୱେଷ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରୁଅଛି । ଏହାର ପ୍ରମାଣସ୍ୱରୂପ
ପୋଲିସ ଓ ପ୍ରଶାସନଙ୍କୁ ଜଣାଇବା ପରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏହାର
କୌଣସି ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ନିଆଯାଇଅଛି ! ତେଣୁ ସରକାରଙ୍କୁ ବିନମ୍ର
ର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ଆକର୍ଷଣ ଜବାବ ଦେବାକୁ ହେବ । ଏବଂ ଆମର
ନିମ୍ନୋକ୍ତ ଦାବିକୁ ମାନିବାକୁ ହେବ ।
୧= ଆଦ୍ୟାଭୂମି କାହା ଆବେଦନରେ ଗୁପ୍ତ ଦୋଷ ବାହାର କରି
ଦେଖା ଯାଉ, ଦୋଷୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଗଣ୍ଡଗୋଳ ସୃଷ୍ଟିକାରୀ ପ୍ରମାଣିତ
ଏବଂ ବିଶୃଙ୍ଖଳା ସୃଷ୍ଟିକାରୀ ବାବା କାରଣରୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ତୁରନ୍ତ ଗିରଫ
କରାଯାଉ । ୨= ପୋଲିସ ଶାନ୍ତି ଚୁକ୍ତିକରେ ଭିନ୍ନ ନେତାମାନଙ୍କୁ
ମାରିଦେବା ପାଇଁ ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଟାକା ଦେଉଛନ୍ତି ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ
ତୁରନ୍ତ ଗିରଫ କରାଯାଉ । (ନାମ – ଆଦ୍ୟାଭୂମି ସମାଜର
ରାମ ଦାସ ବେହେରା, ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ନାୟକ (ଧନ୍ଦୁରବା) ନରିକୁଇ ପାଡ଼ି
ରଞ୍ଜନ ମାଝୁଲି (ଜଗାଗଡ଼ା)
୩= ସାଧୁସନ୍ଥ ପ୍ରଧାନ ମୋର୍ଚ୍ଚା ବନବିହାରୀ ଜେନା ଅମାନୁଷିକଭାବରେ
ଙ୍କ ଗିରଫ ଆଗରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଘରେ ପଶି ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଉପରେ
ର ଏବଂ ଅଶ୍ଳୀଳ ଭାଷାରେ ଗାଳି ଅଧିକାରୀ ବି. କେ.
ଜୟପାଲଙ୍କୁ ତୁରନ୍ତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରୁ ନିଲମ୍ବିତ କରାଯାଉ ।
୪= ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନ ମାନଙ୍କ ଘରେ ଲୁଟ ... ଦୋଷୀମାନଙ୍କୁ
ଗିରଫ କରିବା ... କରାଯାଉ । ଏହା
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

ଗୃହପାଳିତମାନଙ୍କୁ ଲୁଟି ଓ ନିର୍ଯ୍ୟାତନା ମାରିଦେବାପାଇଁ ଲାଗିଛନ୍ତି ।

୨/ କୋରାପୁଟ ଥାନା ଅନ୍ତର୍ଭୁକ୍ତ [illegible] ଗ୍ରାମରେ [illegible] [illegible] ଗ୍ରାମରେ ୧୦/୧୨ ଜଣ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ [illegible] [illegible] କରି [illegible] ଏଥିରେ [illegible] ପରେ [illegible] ନିର୍ଯ୍ୟାତନ କରାଗଲା, ଆମମାନେ [illegible] ପୋଲିସ କାମ କରୁଛି । ୪ = କୋରାପୁଟ ବ୍ଲକରେ [illegible] [illegible] ଅଧିକାର [illegible] [illegible] ମଧ୍ୟ [illegible] କରାଯାଉଛି ଏବଂ [illegible] କରି [illegible] ମଧ୍ୟ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ [illegible] ହିନ୍ଦୁମାନଙ୍କୁ [illegible] କରି ହିନ୍ଦୁ ସେବା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଠିକ୍ ଠିକ୍ କରି [illegible] ମଧ୍ୟ [illegible] । ପୋଲିସ ଏବଂ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ ମାନଙ୍କୁ [illegible] [illegible] କି ନାହିଁ ତେବେ [illegible] ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି କୌଣସି [illegible] ଗ୍ରହଣ କରୁନାହିଁ କାହିଁକି ? [illegible] [illegible] ମାନଙ୍କ ନାମରେ [illegible] ଥାନା [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] । ଏବୁ [illegible] ପୋଲିସ କାମ କରୁଛନ୍ତି ।

୫ – [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ଦ୍ୱାରା [illegible] [illegible] ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] । [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] । [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] । ପୋଲିସର [illegible] [illegible] ଅଧିକାରୀମାନେ [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ ପୋଲିସର [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ପୋଲିସର [illegible] [illegible] ? ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିୟାନ [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ ସମୟରେ ପୋଲିସର ଅମାନୁଷିକ ଗୁଳି ଚାଳନାରେ,
ଜଣ ଆଦିବାସୀ ଶ୍ରମିକ ମୌଳିକବାଦୀଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ଶହୀଦ ହୋଇଥିଲେ
ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ସଂଗ୍ରାମ ସ୍ମୃତି କରୁଛି । ଏହାର ପ୍ରମାଣସ୍ୱରୂପ
ପୋଲିସ ଓ ପ୍ରଶାସନଙ୍କୁ ଜଣାଇବା ପରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏହାର
କୌଣସି ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ନିଆଯାଇନାହିଁ । ତେଣୁ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ବିଷୟ
ର ଯାଞ୍ଚ କରି ଦୋଷୀଙ୍କୁ ଦଣ୍ଡ ଦେବାକୁ ହେବ । ଏବଂ ଆମର
ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଦାବିକୁ ମାନିବାକୁ ହେବ ।
୨= ଆଦିବାସୀ ଜାତି ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନରେ ଗୁପ୍ତ ତଥ୍ୟ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରି
ବନ୍ଧୁ ନାଇ, ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନରେ ସମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିକରେ ପ୍ରମାଣଦ୍ୱାରା
ଏବଂ ଦେଶଦ୍ରୋହୀ ମୁକ୍ତିକରିଥିବା କାରଣରୁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ତୁରନ୍ତ ଗିରଫ
କରାଯାଉ । ୩= ମୋଜନା ଶାନ୍ତି ବୈଠକରେ ହିନ୍ଦୁ ନେତାମାନଙ୍କୁ
ମାରିଦେବା ପାଇଁ ଯେଉଁମାନେ ଚାପ ଦେଉଛନ୍ତି ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ
ତୁରନ୍ତ ଗିରଫ କରାଯାଉ । ନାମ - ଆଦିବାସୀ ସମାଜ,
ରାମ ଧନ ବେହେରା, ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ନାୟକ (ଅନ୍ତରବା) ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣ ପାତ୍ର
ରେବେନ ମାଝୀ (ଜଗାଗଡ଼ା)
୪= ସାଧୁସନ୍ଥ ପ୍ରଧାନ ନେତା ବନବିହାରୀ ଜଣା ଅଶ୍ରୁମାଳିନୀଶ୍ରୀ
ଙ୍କ ଗିରଫ ଆଗରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଘରେ ପଶି ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ଦୁର୍ବ୍ୟବହା
ର ଏବଂ ଅଶ୍ଳୀଳ ଭାଷା କାରଣରୁ ଦାୟୀକାରୀ ପି. କେ.
ଜୟଲାଲଙ୍କୁ ତୁରନ୍ତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରୁ ନିଲମ୍ବିତ କରାଯାଉ ।
୫= ଆଦିବାସୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ଓ ଅଧିକାରୀ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟାନ
ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନମାନଙ୍କୁ ଗିରଫ କରିବା ପାଇଁ କରାଯାଉ । ଏହା
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

ନ୍ୟାୟାଳୟଙ୍କ ଅନୁମତି ଓ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ [illegible] ନାହିଁ ।

୨/ [illegible] ଥାନା ଅନ୍ତର୍ଗତ [illegible] ଗ୍ରାମର [illegible]
[illegible] ଗ୍ରାମର ୧୦/୧୨ ଜଣ ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନ ଯୁବକ [illegible] କରି
ନେଇଯାଇଥିଲେ ଏହାର [illegible] ଦେବା ପରେ [illegible]
ଗିରଫ କରାଗଲା [illegible] ମାନେ [illegible] ପୋଲିସ [illegible]
କରୁଛି । ୩= [illegible] ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ କୌଣସି [illegible] ଅପ୍ରୀତିକର ଘଟଣା
ଘଟିନଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ [illegible] କରାଯାଇଥାଏ ଏବଂ [illegible] କରି
ହିନ୍ଦୁମାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି [illegible] ମଧ୍ୟ କରୁଥିଲେ । [illegible] ହିନ୍ଦୁମାନଙ୍କୁ
[illegible] କରି ହିନ୍ଦୁ ସେବାମାନଙ୍କ [illegible] କରି [illegible]
ମଧ୍ୟ ଦିଆଗଲା । ପୋଲିସ ଏହି ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟିଆନମାନଙ୍କ [illegible] ପାଇଁ
[illegible] କି ନାହିଁ [illegible] ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି
କୌଣସି ଆଇନାନୁଗ [illegible] କରୁନାହିଁ କାହିଁକି ! [illegible]
[illegible] ମାନଙ୍କ ନାମରେ [illegible] ଥାନା [illegible]
[illegible] । ଏହି [illegible] ପୋଲିସ କାମ କରୁଥିଲା ।
୪- [illegible] ଦ୍ଵାରା [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] । ପୋଲିସର ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ଅଧିକାରୀମାନେ
[illegible] ପୋଲିସର [illegible]
[illegible] ପୋଲିସର [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

ମାନନୀୟ ମୋହନା ଥାନା ଅଧିକାରୀ
(ମହୋଦୟଙ୍କ ଶ୍ରୀ ସମିପେଷୁ)
ବିଷୟ :- (ଆଦିବାସୀ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ଅଶ୍ଳୀଳ ବ୍ୟବହାର
ଓ ବଳାତ୍କାର ଉଦ୍ୟମ ର ଅଭିଯୋଗପତ୍ର)

ମହାଶୟ,
ମୁଁ ଶଙ୍କରୀ ପ୍ରଧାନ ସ୍ୱା: ବାବୁଲୁ ପ୍ରଧାନ ରାଇଘର ସାହି ଗ୍ରାମ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଗିରୀ ଥାନା ମୋହନା ଜିଲ୍ଲା ଗଜପତି ଏହିକି ଯେ ମୋ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଜଣେ ପାରାଲିଗାଲକର୍ମଚାରୀ ପାରାଲିଗାଲ ରୂପେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରୁଛନ୍ତି। ତା ୨୦/୮/୦୮ ରିଖ ଶନିବାର ଦିନ ସଞ୍ଜ ୭ ଘଣ୍ଟା ସମୟରେ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଗିରି ଫାଣ୍ଡି ଅଧିକାରୀ ୬ ଜଣ ପୋଲିସ ଏବଂ ହୁରଗାଜଯାନ୍ତି ମୋ ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଜିବାପାଇଁ ମୋଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲେ ବାବୁଲୁ ଘରେ ଅଛି କି କହିବାରୁ ମୁଁ ମନାକରିବା ପରେ ନିଖ ମୋ ଘର କବାଟ ଜବରଦସ୍ତି ଠେଲି ଘରଭିତରେ ପଶିବାପାଇଁ ଉଦ୍ୟମକଲେ। ମୁଁ ସେତେବେଳେ କବାଟ ଛାଡିଦେଇ ଦୁଆର ବନ୍ଦ ପାଇଁ ଠିଆହୋଇ ଘର ଭିତରେ ପଶିବାପାଇଁ ବାରଣକଲେ ସେତେବେଳେ S.I ଗାଳିଗାଳି ଛାଡ଼ିଦେଇ ଗୁହିସେଠି ମାଇକିନାଉଛି ଠିଆହୋଇଛୁ। କାହିଁ ରେ ଏଭଳି ଗାଳି କରୁଛନ୍ତି କହିବାରୁ ତାଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗରେ ଥିବା ବେଶୀ ଗୁଲିକି ହୋଇ ଗଲୁ ଦେଖିଲୁ ବେକାର କରୁଛି —

— କାହି ଜବରଦସ୍ତି ମୋତେ ହିଁଚିନେଲା ମୋର ଭଣଜାଙ୍କୁ
ଖୁଣ୍ଟରୁ ହିଁଚି ଅତ୍ୟାଚାର କଲା। ଏହି ସମୟରେ ମୁଁ
ଓ ମୋର ଝିଅ ଚେଞ୍ଚେଇବାରୁ ଜୋରରେ ପାଟିକରୁ
ପଡ଼ିଶା ଘରୁ, ପଦ୍ମା ଦଳାଇ, ସ୍ୱା. ମୁରଲୀ ଧର ଦଳାଇ,
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ନାୟକ, ସ୍ୱା - ମଧୁସୂଦନ ନାୟକ, କୁମାରୀ ହେମଲତା ଶ୍ରୀ ନୀଳମଣି
ବାସନ୍ତୀ ଜେନା, ସ୍ୱା - କଇଲାଶ
ଏମାନେ କଣ ହେଲା ବୋଲି ଘରକୁ ଦୌଡ଼ି ଆସିବାରୁ
ଧର ଧର ଶବ୍ଦଶୁଣି ଆସାମୀଙ୍କୁ କାହାବି ନଦେଖି
ପରସ୍ପରି ଚଳୁହେବ କାହି ଆମ ଘରୁ ଖସିଗଲେ।
ଏହା କୌଣସି କାରଣରୁ ମୋର ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କ ଯୋଗି
ବାକୁ ଆସିଥିଲେ। ତେବେ ମୁଁ ମାଡ଼ କହିବାରୁ ତାଙ୍କ
ଅପମାନ ହେବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲି। ତେଣୁ ମୋ ଉପରେ ଏହ
ଅତ୍ୟାଚାର ମାଡ଼ମାରି ଲଜ୍ଜା ନାହିଁ କରିଥିବାରୁ
ମୋର ଆଶା ନାହିଁ ଏବଂ ମୋ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ନେଇ ମୁଁ
ଜିଲ୍ଲା S.P ଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ଆତ୍ମାହୁତି ଦେବାକୁ ବାଧ୍ୟ-
ହେବି।

ଇତି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବିଶ୍ୱସ୍ତ

X

ସାକ୍ଷୀ

[illegible signatures]

Colonial Ethnography of the Kandha

'White Man's Burden' or Political Expediency?

Jaganath Pathy

The Kandha of Orissa have been enshrined in the ethnographic literature as practitioners of human sacrifice and female infanticide in the past, and the British are credited with suppressing these 'cruel customs'. A re-examination of the colonial sources exposes the fact that ethnographic reports were designed to justify the brutal repression of the indigenous people's fierce resistance struggle against colonial invasion and oppression.

THE Kandha[1] have been enshrined in the ethnographic literature as cruel practitioners of human sacrifice and female infanticide. Concurrently British rule is credited with the effective annihilation of such heinous customs within a relatively short time. Almost all the evidence till date on these abominable practices of the Kandha comes from colonial army despatches, police records and administrative reports of the period when the Kandha were putting up fierce resistance against the advancing colonists.

The British conquest of Orissa commenced in 1803 and by 1830 virtually all the Hindu kings had come under British rule. But several 'muthaheads'[2] of the Kandhamals,[4] far from recognising British suzerainty, relentlessly continued to resist the alien invasion. In 1835, the Hindu king of Ghumsar refused to pay any tribute ('peskash') to the British, and the peasants revolted against the foreign encroachment. The rebellion was crushed with military might and the king fled to the Kandhamals with his family and treasury. The Kandha gave him shelter while the British army ravaged dozens of Kandha villages, looted their stocks of grain, and publicly hanged several Kandha leaders. In turn, the first batch of British soldiers was killed [Boal 1963: 1-7]. The ailing king died soon in one of the villages, but the entire Kandha region was in a state of unprecedented insurrection.

In August 1836, Russell, a member of the Board of Revenue responsible for controlling the disturbances, sent a brief note to the Madras government, saying that in the Kandhamals the people were notorious for frequent rites of human sacrifice and female infanticide. He suggested that in order to rule over the Kandha territory, it was necessary to revive the fairs formerly held in different localities, as well as to establish a network of new market centres where the British administrators could conveniently approach the Kandha [Selections 1854]. The officer was perhaps bound to explain the local British failure to annex the Kandha territory. Anyway this constituted the first ever written note on these pernicious practices of the Kandha.[4]

Consequently Colonel John Campbell was appointed as the assistant collector of Ganjam district to stamp out these opprobrious practices by annexing the Kandha territory at any cost. In 1841, Lieutenant S C Macpherson succeeded Campbell. Both of them wrote and published books on Kandha ignominious rites, and a few other soldiers and administrators prepared local reports on the subject. These happen to be the only sources on the Kandha people and culture, especially on their flagitious customs. Subsequent scholars, including of the post-colonial period, have mostly reproduced, over and over again, the earlier information of the colonial soldiers *ad nauseam*, without any significant or critical evaluation.

It needs to be noted that neither Campbell nor Macpherson had any knowledge of the Kui, the Kandha language. Even their knowledge of Oriya was insignificant. Both depended upon Oriya traders, chiefs and local officers for information regarding Kandha society and culture. Their acquaintance with the Kandha was "confined to military expeditions in the winter seasons" [Bailey 1957: 177]. General Campbell's book was "bombastic, unreliable and fiercely determined to blacken the character and achievements of Macpherson who was dead when Campbell wrote his book" [Bailey 1957: 177]. And Macpherson's letters and official reports were published by his brother as 'an apologia' (1957:177). Indeed there was a prolonged and bitter jealousy between these two administrators. "For various reasons Campbell and Macpherson alternated several times with one another. When Campbell had charge, he reversed the arrangements made by Macpherson and on one occasion succeeded in getting Macpherson and his entire staff put under arrest. When Macpherson had charge, he removed and then imprisoned Sam Bisoye, in whom Campbell had frequently expressed his confidence" [Bailey 1960: 176-77]. Small wonder that little can be systematically or coherently compiled about Kandha history and culture from their writings. Yet astonishingly, their books and reports have been approvingly cited umpteen times by subsequent ethnographers and anthropologists.

Principally standing upon these official reports and books, a number of subsequent British administrators have written a few pages each on Kandha human sacrifice and female infanticide [Dalton 1872; Hunter 1872; Frazer 1890; Risley 1891; Maddox 1901; O'Malley 1908; Thurston 1909; Russell and Hiralal 1916; Roy 1922 and many others]. Frazer on that basis even asserted that the "best known case of human sacrifices systematically offered to ensure good crops is supplied by the Kandhas" (1890: I-384). Suffice it to state that hardly any one of them had any direct contact with the Kandha. For instance Dalton acknowledged that his:

> ...personal acquaintance with the Kandhas is very limited. I have seen a few in attendance on tributary chiefs, and have fallen in with some families of the tribe in the Bonai dependency; but they had been too long dwelling in a servile position amongst aliens to have retained any distinctive or typical characteristics of their race, and could converse only in Oriya (1872: 285).

Any expectation that ethnographers such as Risley and O'Malley could have verified and elaborated on the accounts of the British soldiers is completely belied. In 1885, the British government had asked Risley to make a comprehensive field survey of the tribes and castes of Bengal for better administration and also as a contribution to comparative ethnological research. Though he claimed that his work was "the first attempt to apply to Indian ethnography the methods of systematic research sanctioned by the authority of European anthropologists" (1891, I: Preface), he relied upon the information provided by Jamesh Taylor, the Tahasildar of Kandhamals, and Rev Father Schaff. They in turn asked their subordinates to administrate on exhaustive interview schedule with as many as 391 questions. There was however not a single question of female infanticide, and three out of the four questions on human sacrifice were of trivial nature. And yet depending largely upon the accounts of the British soldiers, Risley wrote extensively on frequent inter-clan wars to capture wives, female infanticide and human sacrifice. Fortunately he did admit that he had serious "difficulty in ascertaining the precise form of exogamy practised by them, and *indeed in getting any information at all on the subject*" [Risley 1891: I-399, emphasis

About the Author



Brannon Parker was born in Atlanta, Georgia, USA in 1967. His family was party to the signing of the founding charter of the city of Atlanta. As a child Michael lived in Zambia, Africa, India, Kauai and Canada and soon developed a keen interest and familiarity with other people and their cultures. At the age of 18 he settled in the Hawaiian Islands. There he was a landscaper and a farmer. He spent several years planting trees, vegetable and flower farming and caring for dairy cows. In the mid-1990s he moved to Honolulu and became involved in Community TV. There he produced and directed several TV shows on the Olelo TV station. In 1996 Brannon was a candidate for the Hawaii State Senate and in 1997 he was elected to the Waikiki Neighborhood Board. As the Director of Promotions for a multi-media community events organization, Brannon Parker organized over 100 events featuring the art, music and dance of the world's indigenous cultures. It was during this period that he became associated with the Indian arts. He soon developed a deep fascination with India and specifically with its tribal communities. Having long held an interest in the world's native cultures he longed to explore the indigenous tribal cultures of India. He soon began traveling to India making frequent visits to the tribal regions of India such as Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Orissa. In 1998 Brannon moved to Oregon, USA and was appointed to the Board of Directors of Community Television of Lane County. He served as Chairman of the Programming and Promotions departments. During his time in Oregon, Brannon opened '*Planet Goloka Café and Kava Bar'* serving organic food and traditional Hawaiian Kava drinks. The café served as a gathering place for people of all cultures and backgrounds and was the sight of many cultural gatherings. Currently Brannon lives with his family in Seattle, Washington and is a father of four and grandfather of one. He spends his time researching the ancient indigenous cultures of the world and their role in a globalized society. He plans to present his research in a series of books soon to be published.